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WELCOME

Epsom weekend and Ascot's royal meeting. It can't get much better than that for Flat lovers. The cream of European horses - not to mention the occasional Australian and American hot-shot - vying for the cash and the kudos from the world's greatest Flat meetings.

Of course, those superb events are even more enjoyable with a few winning tickets in your pocket and that's what this edition aims to do, with leading tips and trends for the big races.

We also keep one eye on the future with our Talking Two Year Olds and Paddock Picks features designed to put some interesting names in your notebook for later in the season.

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES/ORDERS

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OCEAN SET TO CAUSE WAVES

Paul Ferguson selects his leading contenders for June's leading contests

Last year's St Leger runner-up CRYSTAL OCEAN made a winning return to action at Sandown recently and can follow up in the Hardwicke Stakes at Royal Ascot (Saturday, June 23).

Sir Michael Stoute's four-year-old was most progressive last season, beginning with a maiden success at Nottingham. Following encouraging efforts in the Dante at York and in Royal Ascot's King Edward VII Stakes, the Sea The Stars colt tasted Group race success for the first time in the Gordon Stakes at Glorious Goodwood.

Despite dropping back to 1m2f, Crystal Ocean made a winning start to the season in the Gordon Richard Stakes recently, beating a race-fit rival in the shape of Fabricate, and it came at a time when many of Stoute's horses were appearing to need their first run. He holds entries in the Tattersalls Gold Cup at the Curragh (27th May) and also in the Prince Of Wales's Stakes at Royal Ascot, but the step back up to 1m4f ought to prove ideal and the Hardwicke seems the obvious race for him.

Stoute has saddled the winner of this race on 10 occasions since 1986 and was responsible for five winners in seven years between 2010 and 2016. Crystal Ocean looks an ideal candidate to continue Stoute's magnificent record in the race and he boasts a similar profile to his past five winners, who were all relatively lightly-raced four-year-olds with bags of scope for improvement.



Lah Ti Dar

CORONATION FOR CRACKSMAN

John Gosden's Cracksman also holds an entry in the Hardwicke, but you would imagine that the Prince Of Wales's would be the race for him at Royal Ascot. A winner over course-and-distance in the Champion Stakes last October, last year's Derby third also made a hugely pleasing winning return to action this season, in the Prix Ganay at Longchamp.

The Frankel colt is another who holds an entry in the Tattersalls Gold Cup in Ireland, but I would expect his next outing to come in the Coronation Cup at

Epsom (1st June).

With stable-mate Enable on the sidelines for the time being, Cracksman can be expected to fly the flag at the top level for Gosden and I thoroughly expect him to prove difficult to beat in the both Group 1s during June.

LAH TI DAR IN THE OAKS

The opening day of the two-day Derby meeting could well be a red-letter day for Gosden, as Lah Ti Dar will bid to maintain her unbeaten record in the Oaks.

The beautifully bred daughter of Dubawi created a deep impression on her racecourse debut at Newbury, stretching right away to score with plenty in hand. She took the step up to Listed company in her stride, when winning the Pretty Polly Stakes at Newmarket recently and she already appears to be crying out for the step up to a mile-and-a-half.

Given how she handled the dip last time, there has to be a slight concern about her ability to handle the track, but she is expected to be handed experience of the undulations at the upcoming 'Breakfast with the Stars' and slightly easier ground - It isn't usually fast at Epsom - will also help her cause. She is potentially very exciting and I will be surprised if she doesn't develop into a Group 1 performer before the season is out. I would, however, have been even sweeter on her chance had the Oaks been staged at York or Newbury - where her long stride could be seen to



Crystal Ocean

best effect – so the Yorkshire Oaks could be an ideal target during August.

WARRIOR STRONG FOR DERBY

Recent 2,000 Guineas winner Saxon Warrior heads the market for the following day's Derby and that piece of form is the strongest on offer. I had my doubts about the form of the Racing Post Trophy going into the Guineas, but he dispelled any fears with a taking performance.

If he stays the extra half-mile – his pedigree suggests he should, but more importantly his running style hints that he could improve as he goes up in distance – the Japanese-bred Deep Impact colt really ought to be difficult to stop. He is priced up accordingly, however, to provide Aidan O'Brien with a record-equalling seventh win – and a fifth in the space of seven years from 2012 – in the most famous of Classics.

Away from Saxon Warrior, it looks a relatively open Derby and one colt that has impressed me – on both starts this season – is William Haggas' Young Rascal, who is another Newbury maiden winner that followed up in style, once upped in grade. The winner of the Chester Vase recently – when meeting

trouble in running – he showed a fine turn of foot once angled out and seeing daylight, and he clearly has no problem handling an unorthodox track or with staying the Derby trip. In fact, he looks the type to develop into a St Leger contender as the season unfolds, but he also looks capable of going well in the Derby and is an each-way contender in a race that might just lack a bit of strength in depth.

Again, as with Lah Ti Dar, I look forward to seeing Young Rascal when he returns to a more galloping track, so if he comes up short at Epsom, something like the Great Voltigeur at York's Ebor meeting could be an ideal mid-summer objective, en route to Doncaster.

Away from the upcoming Group 1 action, one horse that I am looking forward to seeing again is the rapidly-improving Qaysar. A winner at Kempton either side of his winter break, Richard Hannon's Choisir three-year-old put forward a very taking last-to-first success at Newbury during April. That victory came off a mark of 90 and he has been handed an entry in the St James's Palace Stakes at Royal Ascot. Whilst that target might be a little fan-

ciful, I certainly think he is more than capable of winning a valuable handicap from a revised mark of 98. He actually held an entry at Newmarket's Guineas meeting over a mile and it could be that he ends up in the Britannia Stakes at the Royal meeting, should we not get to see him beforehand.

On a line through Qaysar, I backed Crack On Crack On when he made a winning reappearance at Lingfield recently. Runner-up to Qaysar in a novice event at Kempton last November, Clive Cox's keen-going Havana Colt proved to be reasonably treated for his return and he is another worth following, despite a 5lbs rise in the weights (now off 86).

He is another that flashed home from the back once switching around the field and he looks one to keep onside. Once he learns to relax, he is another that should get a mile and it wouldn't be a huge shock if the pair were to clash again at some stage in the coming weeks/months. The Paul and Clare Rooney-owned chestnut also appeals as the type that has the natural ability to go up in grade – given how strongly he travels – and there could be a nice prize in him at some point. **RA**

HAVE A CHEEKY BET ON RASCAL

John Anthony was impressed by William Haggas' colt at Chester and thinks the Derby is in his grasp

SAXON WARRIOR is shades of odds-on for the Derby as we go to press and there's little point in backing the 2,000 Guineas winner at this stage, even though he looks much the most likely winner at Epsom.

Many pundits shied away from the Ballydoyle colt at Newmarket, believing he would be much better suited to this 1m4f. Given how he passed his audition with flying colours, a lot of improvement is needed from anything he beat that day.

A few of them will be better for the run with our tip for the race, Elarqam, looking as though he would take a big step forward.

Whether he will the extra half-mile is open to question although he improved as the race went on and wasn't stopping at the line.

He may take in the Irish 2,000 Guineas next and should he finish strongly again a tilt at this race would not be the worst idea. Going to press, his Epsom odds range from 12-1 to 25s, which underlines that plans are rather up in the air with him.

The one that looks the most capable of upsetting the jolly at this stage is **YOUNG RASCAL**.

His effort to win the Chester Vase last time was full of promise. He handled the difficult track well and managed to overcome traffic problems to win with a little bit up his sleeve.

That gives him a little to find with Saxon Warrior but the clock suggests not as much as might be expected. We know he stays the 1m4f distance and he won't lose heart if things don't go quite to plan at Epsom.

That was just his third run — and first out of maiden company — so there should be a lot more to come. At 12-1 in several places, he looks the most interesting runner.

It's not a proper Derby unless the Aga Khan colours are in the mix and his Hazapour impressed when winning the Derrinstown Trial at Leopardstown last time out. He quickened up very nicely there over 1m2f and has the pedigree for this distance. Dermot Weld struggled by his high standards last season but his strike-rate in English Classics is fantastic.

If this son of Shamardal turns up at Epsom on the day he will be a major player, at least for a podium finish.

Looking for a horse or two at a big price to get placed takes us back to Chester and Dee Ex Bee, who was second to Young Rascal in the Vase.

He's already won at Epsom and was also third there in a 1m2f Listed race earlier this season. There's no doubt that he improved for the step up in distance on the Roodee and his ability to handle a difficult track is another tick. He's 33-1 at the time of writing which looks a solid each-way price.

THERE'S a hot favourite in the Oaks too but at least Lah Ti Dar is still 11-4 at the time of writing. One of the main reasons for that is the question marks over which fillies Ballydoyle will be sending for the race.

Clemmie was the one we were all waiting for this winter but she's had setbacks that caused her to miss the 1,000 Guineas and this looks as though it could come too soon.

September is out so Happily looks likely to be the standard bearer. She was sent off favourite for the first Classic at Newmarket and ran well enough to finish third but she was more than two lengths behind shock winner Billesdon Brook. She kept on well enough without screaming that his longer distance would be ideal.

Connections warrant respect but she has a bit to prove over the trip.

It wasn't so much what Lah Ti Dar beat at Newmarket last time but the way she did it. John Gosden's filly managed to pic up and win a Listed contest despite looking very green on just her second run.

She is bred for this distance and gave a strong impression that further than that 1m2f would be ideal. Hopefully that run will bring her right on because greenness could still be an issue at Epsom, although she's likely to have Frankie Dettori on and he's certainly not green when it comes to winning Classics.



Young Rascal



Wild Illusion

WILD ILLUSION ran well in the Guineas and, on breeding at least, looks certain to improve for this longer distance. James Doyle made positive noises after that Newmarket run and she's got a Group 1 win under her belt from the Marcel Boussac at Chantilly last year. Odds of 9-1 don't set the pulse racing but she is full of promise and is the percentage call at this stage.

Perfect Clarity is a potential wildcard after she managed to win the Oaks Trial with plenty in hand despite Adam Kirby dropping his whip. She was improving the further she went and the extra half-furlong in the big race won't do any harm.

Being able to handle Lingfield bodes well for Epsom and, while she has to improve, 16-1 is a decent each-way price for Clive Cox's filly. **RA**

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THE O'BRIEN LESSER LIGHTS CAN SPARKLE

Andy Newton says the Irish maestro has saddled a 50-1 winner in the Oaks before

Wow, it's June already - this year is certainly whizzing by! With the summer months now upon us and the Flat turf action hitting top gear, there's bundles to look forward to.

We've already had two of the five English Classics with the 1,000 & 2,000 Guineas run last month, and we've also the small matter of Royal Ascot this month, but before the action at the Berkshire track we've the two-day Epsom Derby & Oaks Meeting to take in (1st & 2nd June).

Epsom Oaks - The fillies' Classic is run this year on Friday 1st June. We were spoilt last year as the classy Enable burst onto the scene with a five length romp and followed that up by taking the Irish Oaks, King George, Yorkshire Oaks and Arc, so this year's heroine has certainly got big hoofs to fill!

With a CV like that it's very unlikely we are going to see a superstar in the same class as Enable but you never know! These fillies can improve at a rate of knots at this age and, don't forget, last season Enable was fairly well-beaten on her return run at Newbury and before improving to take the Oaks and had only won at Listed level prior to that.

So, what are the trends saying?

Starting with the trainers, then with two wins in the last 10 runnings the

Ralph Beckett team are always respected in this race and often excel with their fillies in general. At the time of writing they've a few entered but a lot can change between now and race day. However, with a stonking six Epsom Oaks under his belt then the powerful Aidan O'Brien stable have the clear 'standout' record of the main stables. They've got an army entered at this stage and come race day are sure to be mob-handed again. 1,000 Guineas third - Happily - and September are their two shortest-priced runners in the betting but don't be put off by backing their third, fourth or even fifth string horses - why? Well, in the past O'Brien has landed the race with 20/1 and 50/1 (Qualify) shots in the last six years!

A recent run is a plus - Yes, horses that raced in the last five weeks have won ALL of the last 16 runnings so this is a key trend to look for, plus with 13 of the last 16 Oaks winners placed in the top two in their most recent race then this is also something to look out for.

Is The Draw Important? Well, you'd think that being run over a trip of 1m4f then the draw shouldn't play a big part - after all the runners should have plenty of time to find a good racing position. Wrong! If the stats are anything to go by then the draw is still something to have on your radar. With 11 of the last 16 winners hailing from stalls 5 or higher then

there must be something in it. Last year's winner - Enable - came out of stall 9, while the first three home in 2017 were also drawn 5 or higher. So, basically, those drawn low have struggled in recent years and this is backed-up with 14 of the last 16 horses from stall 1 being unplaced - however, don't discount horses from stall 2 as seven of the last 14 (59%) have been placed.

Other trends to look for is winning form over at least 1m2f in the past as 11 of the last 16 fit this stat, while in terms of the market leaders it seems to be a race the favourite does do well in. 31% of the last 16 favourites have won, while 10 of the last 16 have hit the frame.

Nine of the last 16 (56%) won last time out, while even though many feel the 1,000 Guineas is a good guide to this race we've only seen Minding (2016) and Kazzia (2002) in recent times land both races - in fact, only four of the last 16 Oaks winners ran in that earlier Newmarket Classic.

So, in summary, and looking at the main trends, the key make-up of recent Epsom Oaks winners has been racing within the last five weeks, having also finished in the top two last time out and coming from stall 5 or higher. Any Aidan O'Brien second or third string can't be overlooked but, for me, the John Gosden team are also building-up a good recent record in the race - win-



Enable won the 2017 Epsom Oaks at 6/1

ning it in 2014 and 2017. With that in mind I'll be paying closer attention to anything they run. At this stage they've several entered - Stream Song, Rocco, Lah Ti Dar, Highgarden and Aim Of Artemis - so I'll be looking nearer the time to see if any of these fillies also fit in with the above mentioned main stats.

Recent Epsom Oaks Winners

- 2017 - Enable (6/1)
- 2016 - Minding (10/11 fav)
- 2015 - Qualify (50/1)
- 2014 - Taghrooda (5/1)
- 2013 - Talent (20/1)
- 2012 - Was (20/1)
- 2011 - Dancing Rain (20/1)
- 2010 - Snow Fairy (9/1)
- 2009 - Sariska (9/4 fav)

- 2008 - Look Here (33/1)
- 2007 - Light Shift (13/2)
- 2006 - Alexandrova (9/4 fav)
- 2005 - Eswarah (11/4 jfav)
- 2004 - Ouija Board (7/2)
- 2003 - Casual Look (10/1)
- 2002 - Kazzia (10/3 fav)

Epsom Oaks Betting Trends

- 16/16 - Ran within the last 5 weeks
- 14/16 - Horses from stall 1 that were unplaced
- 13/16 - Finished 1st or 2nd last time out
- 11/16 - Won from stall 5 or higher
- 11/16 - Won over at least 1m2f previously
- 10/16 - Favourites that were placed
- 9/16 - Won last time out
- 5/16 - Won by the favourite (1 joint)
- 5/16 - Returned a double-figure price

- 4/16 - Ran in the English 1,000 Guineas
- 4/16 - Trained by Aidan O'Brien
- 4/16 - Irish-trained winners
- 2/16 - Trained by Ralph Beckett
- 2/16 - Trained by John Gosden
- 2/16 - Ridden by Ryan Moore
- 0/16 - Had run at the course before
- 0/16 - Had run over 1m4f before
- 7 of the last 11 favourites were unplaced
- Trainer Aidan O'Brien has won the race 6 times
- The average winning SP in the last 16 runnings is 12.5/1

Kazzia (2002) and Minding (2016) were the last horses to win both the 1,000 Guineas and Epsom Oaks
The horse from stall 2 has been placed in 7 of the last 14 runnings

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EPSOM OAKS & DERBY BETTING TRENDS

Next up is the Epsom Derby - run, as always, on the following day from the Oaks (Saturday 2nd June). A bit like the Oaks, the Derby is a race that the Guineas (2,000) gets linked with but in recent years only Sea The Stars (2009) and Camelot (2012) have landed both in the same season - with Nijinsky (1970) the only horse before them to win both.

Four of the last 12 Derby winners did contest the 2,000 Guineas, that is run over a mile the month before but there are also some other key trial races to look out for too.

In recent years, by far the best guide has been the Dante Stakes - run at York last month (17th May). Horses like Motivator, North Light, Authorised and Golden Horn have all won that race before going on to Epsom glory - and in total we've seen 10 Dante winners go on to follow-up in the Derby.

At the time of writing I don't know

the Dante winner but it will certainly be a race I'll be looking back at - plus, it might even be worth looking at all the horses that ran in that York race as Workforce was second in the 2010 running before winning the Derby. Having said that, be a tad warned as so far he's the only beaten Dante runner to go on an make amends in the Derby.

Finally, in terms of trial races, the Chester May Meeting has done a fair job of producing the Derby winner too. Last year's 40/1 shock winner - Wings Of Eagles - was runner-up in the Chester Vase the following month, while Ruler Of The World won that same Chester race in 2013 before glory on the Downs a month later. Kris Kin also took the Dee Stakes, run at Chester, in 2003.

So, what are the stats saying?

Do The Favourites Do Well? It's actually not been too bad a race for the market leaders in recent years. Ok, last year's jolly - Cracksman - could only

manage third and we had a shock 40/1 winner. However, with 6 of the last 16 (38%) favourites winning, and an even better 12 of the last 16 (75%) placed, then it's a race the punters tend to not be too far off the mark - while 6 of those favourites won. 15 of the last 16 winners returned 7/1 or shorter, with the average winning SP over that period just 6/1.

A Recent Run Is Key - All of the last 16 Derby winners had raced no more than 5 times before - suggesting the winner is still fairly unexposed and has more to give. With a massive 15 of the last 16 (94%) winners also having raced in the last 5 weeks then a recent run looks a 'must-have' too. Being placed first or second last time out is another huge stat, with 15 of the last 16 winners fitting the bill here, while 14 of the last 16 (88%) were previous Group race winners.

Is The Draw Important? Yes, just like



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the Oaks, the draw has played its part too. Okay, last year's winner - Wings Of Eagles - came from stall 14, but with 11 of the last 16 winners hailing from a single-figure draw then this is still a trend to take into account.

Trainer Watch - In terms of the main yards to look for then this is yet another of the big English Classics a certain Aidan O'Brien loves to win. We've seen 8 of the last 16 winners being Irish-trained and O'Brien has been responsible for six winners since 2002. On the domestic front then Sir Michael Stoute is flying the flag with five wins, with the last of those coming in 2010 with Workforce.

So, in summary the Derby trends have a similar feel to the Oaks. We are really searching for horses that ran in the last five weeks, plus are priced 7/1 or shorter in the betting. If we add to that a top two finish in their most-recent race and also being a previous Group race winner then these are key attributes to have. The Dante Stakes (run at York in May) is certainly a race to look back on with that contest being a key trial in recent years, as is the Chester Vase, run at the May Meeting (10th)

As I write this the race is still a way off but without wanting to sound too boring, this could be another O'Brien year as he hunts down his seventh Epsom Derby. The recent 2,000 Guineas winner - Saxon Warrior has figured prominently in the betting for a while and after that smooth Newmarket

victory there looks as if there should be more to come now upped in trip.

He's now an unbeaten 4-from-4 and a two-time Group One winner after also landing the Racing Post Trophy last October. His breeding suggests he wants further than a mile so to win those two races underlined his class. He'll be looking to follow in the hoofprints of Ballydoyles Camelot - who won both the Guineas and Derby in 2012 - and if he does then there will be plenty more exciting engagements for this 3 year-old colt to come off the O'Brien conveyor belt. Enjoy!

Past Epsom Derby Winners

- 2017 - Wings of Eagles (40/1)
- 2016 - Harzand (13/2)
- 2015 - Golden Horn (13/8 fav)
- 2014 - Australia (11/8 fav)
- 2013 - Ruler Of The World (7/1)
- 2012 - Camelot (8/13 fav)
- 2011 - Pour Moi (4/1)
- 2010 - Workforce (6/1)
- 2009 - Sea The Stars (11/4)
- 2008 - New Approach (5/1)
- 2007 - Authorized (5/4 fav)
- 2006 - Sir Percy (6/1)
- 2005 - Motivator (3/1 fav)
- 2004 - North Light (7/2 j fav)
- 2003 - Kris Kin (6/1)
- 2002 - High Chaparral (7/2)

Epsom Derby Betting Trends

- 16/16 - Raced no more than 5 times before
- 15/16 - Returned 7/1 or shorter in the

betting

- 15/16 - Ran within the last 5 weeks
 - 15/16 - Finished 1st or 2nd last time out
 - 14/16 - Had won a Group race before
 - 12/16 - Favourites that were placed
 - 11/16 - Won from a single-figure stall
 - 11/16 - Won last time out
 - 11/16 - Had run over at least 1m2f before
 - 10/16 - Had raced no more than 3 times before
 - 8/16 - Had won a Group One before
 - 8/16 - Irish-trained winners
 - 6/16 - Won by the favourite
 - 5/16 - Trained by Aidan O'Brien (won 6 in all)
 - 4/16 - Won the Dante Stakes (York) last time out
 - 4/16 - Ran in the 2,000 Guineas that season (2 winners)
 - 3/16 - Trained by Sir Michael Stoute (won 5 in all)
 - 3/16 - Winners from stall 12 or higher
 - 1/16 - Won over 1m4f before
 - 0/16 - Run at the course before
- The average winning SP in the last 16 runnings is 6/1
- 10 Dante winners went onto win the Derby (Golden Horn, 2015 being the most-recent)
- Only 1 horse that was beaten in the Dante (Workforce) went onto win the Derby

Epsom Derby Trainer Stats

Sir Michael Stoute won the race in 1981, 1986, 2003, 2004, 2010
 Aidan O'Brien won the race in 2001, 2002, 2012, 2013, 2014 & 2017 **RA**

AURUM HAS ASCOT AURA

Andrew Ayres was impressed by Charlie Appleby's Newmarket maiden winner

NEWMARKET APRIL 17 (GOOD-SOFT)

7f three-year-old maiden (Class 4)

Race run in a strong cross-wind

AURUM (Charlie Appleby) looked an absolute picture on this debut and was the clear paddock pick. He did something few managed on the day - quicken to win from just off the pace - and looks well above average. He's bred to be best around this trip (half-brother to the smart speed horses Rouleau and Amadeus Wolf) and might be the right type for something like Royal Ascot's Jersey Stakes.

BALLYQUIN (Andrew Balding) is an attractive medium-sized colt who looked just in need of the outing (as have most from this stable following the harsh winter). He ran a similar race to his sole start in 2017 - prominent before weakening as lack of condition told - and clearly has ability. He'll be fitter next time and will win an ordinary maiden before developing into a useful handicapper.

5f two-year-old novice (Class 4)

Above average form

VAN BEETHOVEN (Aidan O'Brien) looked a cut above his rivals in the paddock and moved sweetly to post. He blew his chance when flopping out of the stalls, but showed plenty by staying on into third under a considerate ride. He should improve past the pair that beat him here and looks useful.

KEMPTON APRIL 18 (STANDARD)

1m3f handicap (Class 6)

Modest event

FREUD (Ian Williams) fluctuated wildly in the market during the day - heavily backed mid-afternoon, massive drifter near the off - and looked burly on this return from a 113-day break. He went on to run encouragingly in fourth and is definitely capable of winning in this grade. Take note when the late market moves speak in his favour.

7f three-year-old novice (Class 5)

Useful event

MAJOR PARTNERSHIP (Saeed Bin Suroor) was well supported but did not look fully wound-up for this debut. Bearing that in mind he did well to run the smart/experienced Il Primo Sole to a length and three-quarters after fluffing the start. He holds some big race entries and will be hard to beat next time.

HOMBRE CASADO (Ed Walker) was mentioned here after his encouraging run over C&D 18-days ago. He looked in tremendous shape again but was given no chance under another negative ride from Liam Keniry. He would have been placed under more aggressive tactics and will be of huge interest when moved into handicaps off his opening mark of 74.

7f three-year-old novice (Class 5)

Race run at a break-neck pace

RUX RUX (Andrew Balding) wasn't

wound up for this and appeared to be ridden with a handicap mark in mind. She was never put into the race with any intent and came home strongly under an unusually quiet Oisin Murphy to finish fifth. This 230,000gns purchase has since been given a handicap mark of 67 and could be thrown-in.

NEWMARKET APRIL 19 (GOOD)

7f three-year-old fillies maiden (Class 4)

Fair form

OCALA (Andrew Balding) is a strong, well-made filly with a mix of speed and stamina in her pedigree. She looked in need of the run here, but travelled strongly just behind the pace and shaped with bags of promise behind the smart winner Sheikha Reika. There was a nine length gap back to the third and Ocala would win any ordinary maiden.

1m2f three-year-old novice (Class 4)

Above average event

RAA ATOLL (John Gosden) cost plenty - 200,000gns - and is a big, lengthy colt with bags of scope. He looked green as grass through the early stages but motored home when the penny dropped and was running down the useful winner Nordic Lights close home. Raa Atoll went on to dot-up in a novice event at Nottingham on May 11 and would be ideal for the Queen's Vase at Royal Ascot.



Lah Ti Dar

NEWBURY APRIL 20 (GOOD-SOFT)

1m2f three-year-old fillies (Class 4) Impressive winner

LAH TI DAR (John Gosden) could hardly be better bred – by Dubawi out of Dar Re Mi – and really took the eye in the paddock. Medium-sized and with a real touch of class about her, she motored along just off the pace and came away smoothly to record a wide margin success. She enhanced her reputation when following-up in the Pretty Polly Stakes at Newmarket on May 6 and would be a big runner in the Oaks granted some give underfoot.

NEWBURY APRIL 21 (GOOD-SOFT)

1m three-year-old novice (Class 4) Ordinary race for the track

DELIVERANCE (Andrew Balding) is bred to stay further and definitely looked as if he needed the run. Slowly away and green, he kept on well from halfway and did well to finish sixth. He'll be a different proposition next time and

will win races.

1m three-year-old maiden (Class 4) Above average event

TA ALLAK (Roger Varian) is bred to be smart – out of Nahrain who won in Group 1 company for this yard – and was a paddock positive. Scopey and with a lovely loping stride, he was green when asked to quicken before staying on strongly into third. He needs further and will improve both mentally and physically for this debut. Keep on the right side of this likeable chestnut.

1m3f three-year-old maiden (Class 3) Race run at a decent clip

ENDLESSLY (Martyn Meade) looked big and burly and still appeared green despite this being his third start. Still, he showed more than on his previous outings and appeals strongly as a colt who will improve in the calmer waters of ordinary handicaps (subsequently been rated 73). He's attracted plenty of support in the past and could be ready to reward his backers.

SAINT MAC (Hughie Morrison) was a long way from fit for this debut and was never put in the race at any stage. He's a long term project but one to bear in mind when moved up in trip as the season progresses.

1m2f handicap (Class 3) Competitive event

ADAMANT (Sir Michael Stoute) had not run since a promising win at Salisbury in April 2017 and looked big and well after his break. Held up just off the pace, he produced a sustained burst of speed up the straight and only narrowly failed to reel-in the useful Lunar Jet. Adamant had excuses when disappointing at Newmarket 15-days later - sat close to a fierce gallop on ground that may have been too quick – and remains one to keep on your side.

BUZZ (Hughie Morrison) was another who looked backward on his return from a long break. He was keen in the paddock and replicated that in the race until blowing up at the two-furlong pole. He's going to strip much sharper

PADDOCK PICKS

for this and, after just five starts, remains unexposed. There's a decent handicap in this gelded son of Motivator.

EPSOM APRIL 25 (GOOD)

1m2f handicap (Class 2)

Competitive race

DASH OF SPICE (David Elsworth) looked in great nick on this return from a 133-day absence. He ran a blinder too, making most and sticking on gamely to chase home the more experienced Ajman King. This attractive colt is bred to improve - his dam Dashiba got better with age - and could develop into a smart middle-distance performer this term.

SANDOWN APRIL 27 (GOOD-SOFT)

1m2f three-year-old fillies' novice (Class 4)

Race that will produce winners

MUST BE MAGIC (Andrew Balding) showed plenty on her sole start in 2017 and had been given a favourable mention by her talented trainer earlier this spring. She looked a shade backward on this reappearance but showed plenty in fifth, only fading late after attempting to make all. She'll improve for this and develop into a useful middle-distance performer.

TOLKYN (Roger Varian) was definitely in need of the run and had no chance of getting competitive after starting slowly and being held-up in last spot. Bearing that in mind, she ran with plenty of credit to come home sixth and will win a race or two.

LEICESTER APRIL 28 (HEAVY)

5f two-year-old novice (Class 5)

Race run in extremely testing conditions

TRUE MASON (Karl Burke) is a bull-necked, mature looking juvenile who was well supported throughout the day. He travelled strongly but weakened from the furlong pole and may not have appreciated the desperate going (he's by a soft ground sire but moved smoothly to post). If looks are any guide he will leave this form behind.



LINGFIELD MAY 11 (GOOD, GOOD-FIRM IN PLACES)

1m2f three-year-old fillies (Class 5)

Competitive race

HULCOTE (Clive Cox) has a smashing pedigree (by Frankel out of the tough Listed winner Polly's Mark) and was well supported for this debut. A tall, raw looking filly, she looked green under pressure and shaped with bags of promise in fourth. There's plenty of improvement in this scopey bay and she could be above average.

7f novice (Class 5)

Fair form

LEDHAM (Sir Michael Stoute) looked as if he would come on for the run and faced a tricky task from a poor draw in stall 4. Bearing that in mind, he ran a cracker to chase home the front-running Jawwaal and is likely to leave this form behind. He'll stay further - brother to a 1m2f winner - and must be followed.

ACQUIRER (Richard Hughes) cost 130,000gns and certainly looks the part. He was never seriously involved - as had been the case on his two previous outings - and finished in rear. If

A-Z OF PADDOCK POSITIVES

ACQUIRER (Richard Hughes)
ADAMANT (Sir Michael Stoute)
AURUM (Charlie Appleby)
BALLYQUIN (Andrew Balding)
BUZZ (Hughie Morrison)
DASH OF SPICE (David Elsworth)
DELIVERANCE (Andrew Balding)
DREAMFIELD (John Gosden)
ENDLESSLY (Martyn Meade)
FREUD (Ian Williams)
GEORGE OF HEARTS (Richard Hughes)
HOMBRE CASADO (Ed Walker)
HULCOTE (Clive Cox)
LAH TI DAR (John Gosden)
LEDHAM (Sir Michael Stoute)
MAJOR PARTNERSHIP (Saeed Bin Suroor)
MUST BE MAGIC (Andrew Balding)
OCALA (Andrew Balding)
RAA ATOLL (John Gosden)
RUX RUX (Andrew Balding)
SAINT MAC (Hughie Morrison)
TA ALLAK (Roger Varian)
TOLKYN (Roger Varian)
TRUE MASON (Karl Burke)
VAN BEEHOVEN (Aidan O'Brien)

looks are any guide he'll be a different proposition when moved into handicaps.

ASCOT MAY 11 (GOOD-FIRM)

7f three-year-old handicap (Class 2)

Smart contest

GEORGE OF HEARTS (Richard Hughes) is a particularly handsome colt and was the clear paddock pick. He looked a shade unlucky not to collect, being messed about when attempting to find a run and then just running out of time to reel-in the tough winner Society Power. A step-up to 1m could help and this talented grey is a big-race winner waiting to happen.

6f handicap (Class 3)

Impressive winner

DREAMFIELD (John Gosden) was returning from a 569-day absence but that did not deter backers from sending him off an odds-on shot in this seemingly competitive 15-runner field. He bossed his rivals from the off, making-all and winning cosily under a confident James Doyle. Dreamfield outclassed his rivals in the paddock - he looks a Group horse - and on the track here and is a top sprinter in the making. **RA**

GO KNIGHT TO BEHOLD EACH WAY AT 16/1

Charlie McCann says Saxon Warrior is looking skinny for the Derby and suggests some better value bets

The unbeaten 2000 Guineas winner Saxon Warrior obviously has the best form and is a worthy favourite for the Investec Derby at Epsom but at his current odds of 4/6 at BetVictor he must be worth opposing given his breeding suggests he is not guaranteed to stay a mile-and-a-half.

If he does stay, he will be almost impossible to beat but he is the brother - not half-brother - of a 7f winner and his dam (Maybe) certainly didn't improve for the step up in distance when fifth in the Oaks although to her credit she was not beaten far.

I thought it was interesting that jockey Donnacha O'Brien thought 10 furlongs would be the colt's optimum trip, when interviewed in the immediate aftermath of the Newmarket Classic and if you want to take the odds I would not want any potential stamina doubts.

Yes, his innate class might see him through even if he is not a genuine stayer at the trip, but I would prefer to look elsewhere for an each way alternative. Note impressive Dante winner Roaring Lion does not enter my calculations given I felt John Gosden appeared to leaning more towards the French Derby than Epsom when interviewed at York.

The long-range weather forecast has improved in recent weeks and there is not much rain due to hit the track in the

period running up to the two-day meeting.

My two each way alternatives are recent Classic Trial winners Knight To Behold (16/1 with BetVictor) and Hazapour (14/1 at BetVictor) and I feel both are guaranteed to stay and will act on ground that is likely to be good or faster if the meteorologists are to be believed.

I felt it was significant that Aidan O'Brien suggested at a recent Open Day at Ballydoyle that Kew Gardens would be one of four likely colts he will take to Epsom. It might be worth noting that the stable won the 2017 Derby with their fifth choice (Wings Of Eagles) as far as jockey bookings and the market was concerned. Do note the brilliant Cracksman was beaten a length in the corresponding race 12 months ago.

Knight To Behold did us a favour when winning the Lingfield Derby Trial despite refusing to settle and having to make much of his own running under Richard Kingscote for Harry Dunlop. There were many who felt the jockey pinched the race from the front, but I felt the horse was going away again at the finish and I hope he is more amenable to restraint with that first run of the season under his belt.

The time was only marginally quicker than the Oaks Trial 35 minutes earlier but there was significant rain during the afternoon and the winning time I feel should be marked up. I would argue

that the colt would be much shorter in the betting if he were trained by a more high-profile handler and I feel he is an exciting prospect.

There was a real glint in the eye of Dermot Weld after his Hazapour won the Derrinstown Stud Derby Trial at Leopardstown earlier in the month. The colt was allowed to go off at 16/1 - nibbled at from 25s - for his trial as a result of the weight of money for the Ballydoyle duo The Pentagon and Delano Roosevelt and O'Brien nominated the pair as also being likely representatives in his Derby squad.

Hazapour is a nephew of the yard's Epsom winner Harzand and looks entitled to improve for the step up to 12f for the first time in the Derby.

There was talk of the Triple Crown for Saxon Warrior at the Ballydoyle open day - only 7/2 with BetVictor - but I'm not convinced he will turn up on Town Moor even if he does win the Derby. Saxon Warrior has never raced at a trip other than a mile and yes, it is possible that he might improve for the step up in trip as a son of Deep Impact, but at 4/6 he is readily overlooked.

Investec Derby: antepost recommendations

Hazapour point each way at 14/1 with BetVictor

Knight To Behold point each way at 16/1 with BetVictor **RA**

STAMP OUT TROUBLE

Rory Paddock says violence at racecourses add further black marks to our beloved sport.

Yobs, thugs, louts, hooligans. Words that unfortunately seep their way into the nations vocabulary as we approach a major football tournament such as this summer's World Cup and up until now are words that have been far removed from the world of racing. Sadly this past month has shown that our beloved sport isn't immune to people looking to cause trouble.

The first of two high-profile incidents took place on the opening day of the season at Goodwood. With up to 50 men deciding that the best way to cap off a day's racing was to indulge in some beer-fuelled violence.

The most shocking moment of the melee was caught on camera as a man lay flat on his back while another mercilessly soccer kicked him in the head, rendering him unconscious.

As many of those involved left with scrapes, bruises and bloodied noses genuine racegoers were left in shock and fear.

Six people, including two of the racecourses in-house security, needed medical assistance.

A statement from Goodwood read: "Goodwood Racecourse was informed of a disturbance during this afternoon's racing. The incident was dealt with by on-event security and Sussex Police were

notified as a precaution.

"Goodwood Racecourse wishes to apologise to any racegoer who was affected by this incident."

Less than a week later, at a venue renowned for being the crème de la crème of British Flat racing and synonymous with royalty, more disturbing scenes were on display at Ascot.

Once again phone cameras were on hand to capture the ugly scenes as groups of men dressed in three-piece suits clashed at the course before spilling out onto the street. On-looking innocent members of the public were once again left in fear.

Thankfully this time around medical assistance wasn't required.

Ascot's communications manager - Ashley Morton-Hunte stated: "Sadly, an irresponsible minority can impact on the majority. We take all anti-social behaviour seriously, and can and did eject people."

The biggest relief anyone can take from these harrowing incidents is that nobody was left seriously hurt but how long can do these shocking occurrences need to continue before they're stamped out?

In order to protect the sport we need to look at other sports and see how we can take a leaf out of their books when it comes to crowd control.

When you witness the numerous foot-

ball matches held across the country every weekend, no matter at what level, you will see a very visible security and police presence. This noticeable strong arm of the law is often negligible at racecourses.

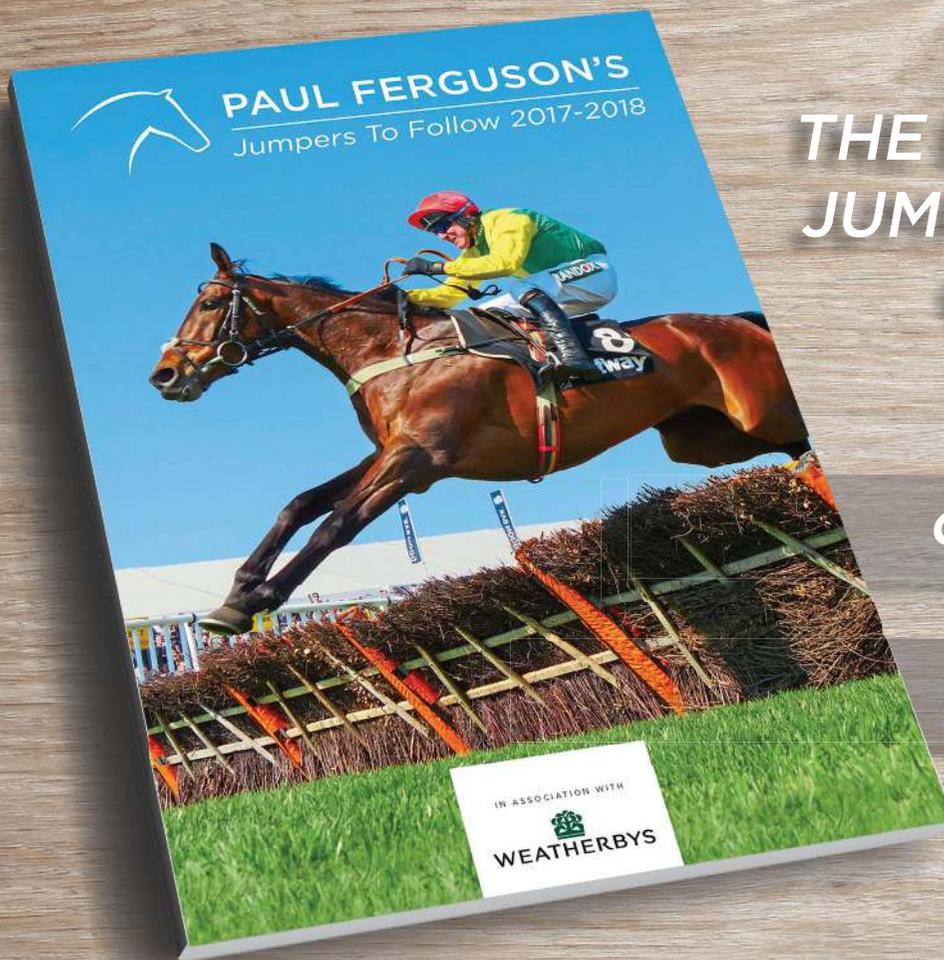
Now I'm not ignorant enough to ignore the fact that a police presence at any event costs the organisers money but surely it's a price you should be happy to pay to ensure people's safety?

With the levels of attendances at British courses declining in the past decade it's understandable and necessary for the sport's survival that the powers that be do all they can to attract new fans to the sport.

With many bigger courses now offering after racing concerts it's certainly seen a rise in getting people through the gates; however while they do all they can to attract visitors it's starting to change people's perception of "a day at the races".

It's detracting away from racing itself and instead is marketed as a great place for stag and hen do's, a party atmosphere and a cheaper alternative to a long weekend in Prague.

For any enterprise to survive it needs a fair share of paying customers, so you must ensure that the people who genuinely love racing, are put at the forefront of all that racecourses do before the name of racing is tarnished beyond repair. **RA**



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O'BRIEN DREAMS ABOUT A NEW NIJINSKY

Jonathan Powell says Ballydoyle are hoping Saxon Warrior can go one better than Camelot

With the extraordinary total of 300 Group 1 winners safely gathered in, Aidan O'Brien is still restlessly seeking new challenges from his base at Ballydoyle in County Tipperary.

So it wasn't the greatest surprise to learn that he and the power brokers at the nearby Coolmore Stud are setting their sights on the notably elusive Triple Crown for their imposing recent 2,000 Guineas winner Saxon Warrior.

The colt had barely passed the Newmarket winning post before speculation began that he might attempt the feat last achieved by Nijinsky in 1970 of completing a notable treble in the Guineas, Derby, and St Leger.

Younger racing enthusiasts might wonder what all the fuss is about, yet to be there at Doncaster that September day in 1970 was to understand the ferocious nature of the challenge.

It was the first St Leger I covered in my new job as racing correspondent of the *News of the World* and there was huge excitement that the handsome Nijinsky had matched the deeds of Bahram who landed the Triple Crown in 1935.

Nijinsky seemed to win comfortably that afternoon but there was a price to pay for his historic achievement. In the days that followed it emerged that following his jaunty success in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes

at Ascot he suffered from a severe bout of ringworm, a debilitating skin infection that can take a while to clear. Much of the horse's hair felt out and for a while he was unable to be ridden. Vital weeks were lost from his training routine.

Given the severity of the problem, Nijinsky's trainer Vincent O'Brien was far from keen to run him at Doncaster. He had long targeted the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in Paris for the colt. The trip of a mile and a half was ideal and, crucially, he would have around three more weeks to bring the colt back to peak fitness.

Charles Englehard, his owner, then threw a king-sized spanner in the works by requesting that Nijinsky should take up his date with destiny at Doncaster.

You could argue that the opposition was not the strongest but they were all race fit rivals while Nijinsky arrived at Town Moor after a rushed preparation in a bid to extend his winning sequence to twelve.

His cramped odds of 2-7 belied the real concerns held by his trainer whose nerves were not helped when his jockey Lester Piggott was slightly shaken by a heavy fall earlier in the afternoon as the starting stalls opened.

There was further drama at Doncaster when news broke that Piggott was the subject of a threat from a man who escaped from the nearby mental institution at Rampton.

Plain clothes policeman shadowed his every move that day though you wouldn't have known as his taciturn expression never changed. As ever he was there to do a job and nothing was going to distract him.

Any doubts about the favourite's ability to stay the extended one mile, six furlongs and 132 yards were soon forgotten as he ranged alongside the leaders three furlongs out before easing into the lead and winning by a smooth as silk length from the fast finishing Meadowville.

Piggott suggested: "He did it all right, didn't he? He was cantering the whole way, it was just a good gallop for him and as usual he did nothing once he got to the front."

Yet in more private conversations with O'Brien the jockey hinted that Nijinsky was all out at the end of the St Leger and could not have won by much further.

There was further concern for the trainer when he discovered that Nijinsky had lost 29 lbs in weight by the time he returned to Ballydoyle.

This was alarming as normally he took his races in his stride and lost barely any condition.

There can be little doubt that winning the final leg of the fabulous Triple Crown took the edge off the majestic Nijinsky. I can still remember the shock, the numbing sense of disbelief when he



Nijinsky and Lester Piggott win the 1970 St Leger from Meadowville

was subsequently beaten narrowly by Sassafra in the Arc.

O'Brien was anxious that his great colt should then make a triumphant farewell in the Champion Stakes at Newmarket in October. It didn't look the hardest Group 1 race of his career and some pundits foolishly suggested it was simply a case of him turning up to complete the formality of a lap of honour.

But there was more disappointment to come when Nijinsky lost again, beaten by the unconsidered Lorenzaccio. It was a sorry end to a fabulous career.

Since Nijinsky's mighty deeds in 1970 only three colts have qualified to tackle the third leg of the Triple Crown though the jaunty filly Oh So Sharp famously completed the female equivalent in 1985.

The Triple Crown was never on the agenda for Nashwan while Sea The Stars by-passed the St Leger before

ending a stellar three-year-old campaign with a stirring victory from an unpromising position in the Arc.

Then there was Camelot, ridden by the youthful Joseph O'Brien, who came tantalisingly close in 2012 to emulating Nijinsky.

He was owned, like Saxon Warrior, by the trio of John Magnier, Michael Tabor and Derrick Smith, often described fondly by Aidan O'Brien as 'the lads'.

At the heart of their desire to achieve the Triple Crown is the belief that they have unfinished business following the narrow defeat of Camelot in the third and final leg at Doncaster.

O'Brien has already indicated that 'the lads' are up for the challenge. It is easy to appreciate that Magnier, the breeding genius behind the march of Coolmore, is driven by the romantic dream to match the feat of his late father-in-law Vincent O'Brien who trained Nijinsky with a rare sureness of touch.

Once Camelot breezed through his engagements in the Guineas and Derby the St Leger was always going to be the priority.

There was a time when the best colts of their generation were rushed off to a sultan's life at stud with indecent haste before they had confirmed their excellence on the racecourse.

Not any more, thanks largely to the campaigning spirit of Magnier whose example has happily been followed by other leading lights in the bloodstock world. Many of Ballydoyle's best colts race on at four and sometimes five before heading to the covering barns nearby at Coolmore.

Aidan O'Brien reasons that getting the balance right is something of a gamble for his owners.

"The thing used to be to get them to the races then off to stud. While we do race the horses more now it is dangerous for the people who are investing in

JONATHAN POWELL



Camelot (left) is beaten in the 2012 St Leger

the bloodstock because they are always liable to disappoint and not be worth as much as they would have been when they go to stud.”

The task for O’Brien is to turn his equine blue bloods into stallions and for him each year the Derby at Epsom is the ultimate goal.

“Any horse that wins the Guineas you are always hoping that they will get one and a quarter miles, and if they do you’d say if we are lucky he will get one and a half miles,” he says.

The St Leger, though, is another big step up with an extra two and a half furlongs placing a notable emphasis on stamina over speed.

Camelot looked to have all the requirements going to Doncaster but was undone by a surprisingly pedestrian pace and trouble in running at the crucial stage of the race when the tempo quickened.

Even so he was beaten only three-quarters of a length by the 33-1 shot Encke who got first run in the straight and was trained by Mohammed Al Zarooni who later brought disgrace on

his Godolphin employers after being banished from the sport for doping his horses on an industrial scale.

O’Brien talks with passion of the unique challenge posed by the Triple Crown.

“For us all the dream was to some day have a horse who would be able to compete in what is probably the ultimate test of a thoroughbred in their Classic year.

“The first thing that greets you when you come through the gates here at Ballydoyle is the statue of Nijinsky. He sets the benchmark though extra distance can break hearts.”

You could almost reach out touch the disappointment on O’Brien’s face at Doncaster when Camelot just come up short in his bid for the Triple Crown.

He conceded: “We expected Camelot to win the St Leger and if I thought they were going to go that steady I would have put in a pacemaker or two. So that was my fault.

“I was sure they were going to go a decent pace but it wasn’t what we thought it would be.

“You have to take your time over an extended mile and six furlongs and Joseph did that on Camelot but when he got out he just stayed on rather than quickened. While in the Derby he quickened.

“Camelot still ran a great race but just got beaten. It was disappointing but it’s the way it was.”

Now talk of another Triple Crown bid from Ballydoyle by Saxon Warrior is gaining momentum though first there is the not inconsiderable test at Epsom before we all get carried away.

O’Brien cannot disguise his admiration for the colt who won in style at Newmarket.

The trainer admits: “It is rare to have a horse you can even think about doing it. We hoped one might come along again to try for the Triple Crown and we felt that if we had a horse for it this year it was Saxon Warrior.

“He has become a massive colt, a big monster of a horse after putting on a lot of weight over the winter and we are still alive and kicking after the first round in the Guineas.” **RA**

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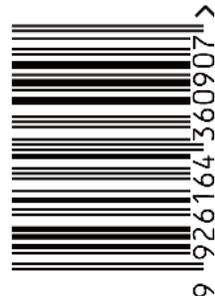
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HAZAPOUR CAN OUTBATTLE WARRIOR

Tony Keenan has an interesting choice from Ireland for the Epsom Derby

The Irish Flat season has had a particularly stop-start opening this year and while some of that is to do the eternal fractured nature of the programme in the early part of the campaign, there have been other factors too. Mullins versus Elliott dominated the racing news cycle for much of the spring which increased the focus on Fairyhouse and especially Punchestown just as the Flat action should have been picking up. I will try to avoid writing about that pair until the autumn but it is interesting to note that Mullins has started the summer season well while Elliott has had very few runners.

Mention of so-called warm season at all might be presumptuous given the winter that has just passed and that has been another contributor to the flat starting slowly: there simply hasn't been any decent ground. Indeed, the Derrinstown Derby Trial card run at Leopardstown on May 13th saw officially good going for the first time at an Irish Flat meeting since the Irish Champions Weekend meeting at the same track the previous September!

On the training front it has been business as usual for Aidan O'Brien with Saxon Warrior bringing up a ninth win in the 2,000 Guineas. It was Mendelssohn at the Kentucky Derby on the same day that really caught my attention and though his race was a mess from the



morning of with rain pelting Churchill Downs, it did open a new event horizon for Coolmore/Ballydoyle.

Certainly he seems worth another go in a top American dirt race with the Breeders' Cup Classic his main target later on though one does wonder if you can win a Kentucky Derby off the back of non-US-based prep, be it in Dubai or elsewhere. Jetting horses in from Europe close to the off may not work and perhaps O'Brien himself would need to be in situ in Kentucky for the weeks beforehand though this would certainly come at a cost at home. The

operation simply has so many horses now that they need to look for new places to run. Back at home, one of the more interesting features of the early part of O'Brien's season has been the forward nature of his juveniles; at the time of writing with five of his eight two-year-olds to run having won which has to be a positive ahead of Royal Ascot. Certainly they didn't seem as ready in 2017.

O'Brien's two old rivals - in as much as a dominant force can have rivals - face interesting seasons. Dermot Weld had a really poor 2017, his winner total the lowest since 1988 and probably before that; 1988 is as far back as the Racing Post database for season totals goes back. He barely managed winner at Galway and it was worrying to see him comment early this season that his numbers were down. The loss of quantity may have seen an uptick in quality however as he has started the 2018 campaign well with Imaging and Hazapour looking a pair of colts that wouldn't be out of place in Classics.

Jim Bolger has not been finding things go quite so well however with his star juvenile from last season Verbal Dexterity ruled out for the moment with the Irish Champion Stakes his long-term aim; indeed, if not for Verbal Dexterity last season, it would have been Ger Lyons who chased home Aidan O'Brien in the trainers' championship.

Lyons remains on the up and already



Hazapour

has a number of Listed and Group winners on the board this season; the likes of Who's Steph, Lightening Quick, Psychedelic Funk and Ardhoomey have all won such races. The bigger owners are coming into the yard too which is deserved based on recent results; Khalid Abdullah is now involved at Glenburnie with George Strawbridge recently buying into Who's Steph. Howard Yiang is another new patron and seems willing to spend his Scat Daddy colt California Daddy costing \$325,000 at Saratoga and shaping well on debut at Naas.

Another new (if not young) trainer to note is Richard O'Brien who remarkably continues to be a part-time dentist in between training racehorses! Of all Irish trainers with a minimum of 50 runners last season, he maintained the highest winner to runner ratio of 56% ahead of Lyons on 55% and the other O'Brien on 53%. Part of that was sample size as he has a relatively small yard but he has continued the good returns this term with six of his nine individual runners managing to win a race already and this is all the more impressive as most of the them are coming from other yards.

HAZAPOUR MAKES DERBY APPEAL

At this time of the year, the Epsom Derby inevitably looms large and Saxon Warrior is the obvious starting point; given as one to follow here last month, I didn't think he'd be a Guineas horse and the vibes ahead of that race were quite negative. The money did come for him late as the initial favourite Gustav Klimt drifted but even so it is only reasonable to expect him to improve for the run. It is difficult to imagine that those who finished behind him can reverse form at Epsom - he was making his seasonal reappearance unlike some of his rivals that had had a prep run - though there is a slight concern that he may be too fast for a Derby. Mutterings about a Triple Crown bid in the St. Leger suggest that could be clutching at straws for those looking to oppose him.

The one that appeals at the moment as an alternative to him is the Derrinstown winner Hazapour; he looked a horse that had improved markedly over the winter at Leopardstown and decent ground clearly suits him well on that evidence. I don't like backing Weld horses

for UK classics in the early part of the year as they often fail to get there but his record when travelling with such horses is excellent; since 2003, he has run just nine horses in either of the Guineas, the Oaks or the Derby with two winning and two more in the frame, impressive numbers for anyone other than Aidan O'Brien. From the family of Harzand, Hazapour is clearly bred for the job and the trainer's comment that he is 'a stayer with speed' suggests he is just the type for the Derby.

OAKS LOOKS WIDE OPEN

The picture for the Oaks is much murkier. It now looks likely that none of the big four juvenile fillies of last year from Ballydoyle - Clemmie, September, Happily and Magical - will make the race; neither Clemmie nor September are ready yet after setbacks, Happily seems likely to take in the Irish 1,000 with the Oaks coming too soon while Magical hasn't fired yet. Perhaps O'Brien thinks he will have enough with likes of Magic Wand, Bye Bye Baby and Forever Together who showed up well in the trials but I'm not so sure. His challenge



Cliffs of Moher (centre)

for the Coronation Cup is more obvious with Cliffs Of Moher and Idaho, both placed in the Derby the last two years, likely runners though they would need Cracksman to underperform in a big way to win.

HORSES TO FOLLOW

Away from the major races, there are a few horses that are worth following in the short term. Rattling Jewel has benefitted from some lenient handicapping over the winter and has been dropped from a peak rating of 90 last summer to 75 at the start of this season. That would be enough to make him interesting itself but he has recently moved to Joseph O'Brien, a significant trainer upgrade, and his return at Naas when not particularly fancied was excellent over a trip short of his best with his time-figure suggesting he was as good as ever. Sprint handicaps at the Curragh are likely on the agenda and he has built a good record there; from 13 runs at the track, he has three wins and six more

top five finishes which is impressive given the competitive nature of such races.

Speaking of sprint handicappers, Casimiro trained by Ger Lyons could be up to winning a race if dropped in trip. His trainer has seemed less than enthusiastic about him in recent blogs but he is part-owned by David Spratt who tends to be one of the best around in buying horses-in-training out of other yards; Mawaany and Inscribe are recent acquisitions that have won good races for him. There was promise in both his runs to date for Lyons, travelling well but seemingly blowing up on heavy ground on his seasonal return at Leopardstown before again showing a high cruising speed at the same track on his next start. Both those runs came over seven furlongs but six looks like it will be more his thing.

Claregate Street had something of a truncated 2017, managing six runs in all but also having breaks off 55 and 86 days off the track which didn't allow her

to ever get into full swing. That might be better for Mick Halford's filly in the long term however as she has a massive frame and may have needed time to mature into it but there was plenty to like about her win at Dundalk in early May. Even though she was allowed to dictate a steady pace, she looked to have plenty left at the line and having started from a low base she could improve again. She certainly wouldn't be the first horse from this yard to step up markedly on her three-year-old form at four.

Dermot Weld's good start to the season has been mentioned above and Imaging could be one to keep onside in better races. His form with Gustav Klimt didn't work out in the 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket but it wouldn't have been the greatest surprise if the Ballydoyle runner bounced there as it was his first run since the previous July and Imaging did his bit for the form when winning the Tetrarch at Naas. Things went anything but smoothly in that race as he



Gustav Klimt

met plenty of trouble and had to quicken to get himself out of trouble in the final furlong which he did pretty easily. Judging by that - and some sharp sections in his earlier races - the mile may

be too far for him with seven furlongs and perhaps even shorter being more suitable.

The final horse is quite left-field with the Flat season getting going but

Canardier looks a summer jumper to follow after breaking his maiden at Down Royal on the May Bank Holiday; despite being keen for much of the race, he won easily. He was much better than the result when behind the Supreme fourth Paloma Blue at Christmas, travelling well to the turn but badly hampered, and that is form that worked out with the second Impact Factor doing his bit for it.

He didn't run for over four months afterwards but that may have been a blessing in disguise as he managed to avoid the pick of the Mullins and Elliott novices in the winter and seems better on summer ground anyway. Mullins and Elliott seem engaged in a 12-month trainers' championship at this point but their summer horses are weaker and Canardier could be able to mix it with them with Galway being an obvious medium-term target. **RA**




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DON'T SNUB THE PUNTERS, JOHN

Matt Mitter decries John Gosden's parade ring absence

Last month I used this column to have a good old moan and, who knows, maybe it is my age but I am going to have another one!

Years ago when I attended loads of courses to do a bit of paddock watching and other things I was a regular figure on track. Now over the last year I have been building the Value Rater brand and have been largely missing from race courses.

I now have an excellent staff team back at Value Rater HQ and that has enabled me to get back to what I am good at, being on course. It is good to be back more regularly but there have been some worrying and alarming differences.

I must call out race courses to ensure horses attend the pre-parade ring followed by the paddock because I have been amazed and sickened by how many are missing.

At Kempton where I regularly attend you do still get to see most horses in the pre-parade followed by the paddock. I was, however, most disappointed to see at Sandown on a big Friday meeting recently that John Gosden appeared to show little respect for the punters there and this tradition. As much as I have great respect for Gosden as a trainer and a judge for I do think he treats the betting public with contempt. Many in racing go native and refuse to call things out but not me!

As far as I am concerned if you have a race horse that you hope could be a champion is to go through the preliminaries so the public can see your horses. The counter argument would be we

don't want the horse revved up and we want to keep a lid on them etc.

I would reply: Aren't the preliminaries part of the whole test for the horse? (The debate about some tracks not having the facility to let you see the horses gallop to post has rumbled on for some time and that is an ongoing issue.)

I would like to see a new law put in place by the BHA whereby horses must attend pre-parade and paddock. It should not matter a jot whether it is a lowly Kempton meeting or a big day at Sandown or another Grade 1 - track they should be there to be viewed.

We spoke before here about the tracks increasing obsession with commercial activity and the negative aspects of that are in the news currently. The tracks would do well to remember that the edge from going racing is getting smaller and smaller. Many will say what is the point in coming at all if you cannot get the range of benefits you expect. Even if you are a pro gambler you still have to pay your gate entry etc to see these horses and I think it is absolutely disgraceful that the bread and butter customers, the diehard racing fans, are largely ignored.

I find our treatment appalling and last time I was at Sandown there was a mature person by the pre-parade and I said to him, "Do they not come in here anymore?" He replied: "Not really". John Gosden's horse just bypassed it and even though there is a long walkway that is not the point, the pre-parade and paddock are there for a reason. There are nice horses from the Gosden yard

and they are athletes who need to warm up and be seen before they race. Footballers have to warm up in front of the crowd and whether equine or human it is part of the overall test. I also think it would help the horses prepare for the massive meetings and festivals when they have to cope with all the fanfares and bells and whistles those days bring.

I know - a right old bloody moan again but I really think it is appalling and it would be nice if tracks took some time from organising parties and concerts to remember the traditions of racing. Readers of this esteemed magazine I hope will be nodding their heads in agreement to this article and it is only by complaining that the tracks may then listen.

One benefit of my increased attendance is that my members get a full report and when I do actually get to see the horses I can report back in extensive notes with horses to follow etc. It has been highly beneficial already because as well as analysing the race of the day I can reflect back on the meetings I have been to, including detailed paddock notes. As readers of *Racing Ahead* magazine I am sure it will be right up your street.

Only for *Racing Ahead* readers we have a very special offer on my Race Reader service and that is a whopping 75% off your first month or quarter of the service.

Have a great month and let's hope Sandown and other tracks start putting their bread and butter customers first for once.

Matt Mitter aka Race Reader 

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ROYAL ASCOT STAT PACK

Malcolm Boyle leafs through the record books to bring us the key pointers for the big meeting – and Mike Francis has gone through each race looking for key trends

GENERAL STATS AT ASCOT IN 2018:

18 races – 8 winning favourites – 15/18 winners scored at a top price of 9/2

Leading trainers at Ascot this season:

2/5—Clive Cox (10/1 & 9/2)
2/5—Roger Varian (4/1* & 10/11*)
2/6—John Gosden (5/2 & 10/11*)
2/6—William Haggas (9/2 & 9/4**)
1/1—Simon Crisford (5/2)
1/1—Mrs John Harrington (9/4*)
1/1—Hugo Palmer (7/2)
1/1—James Tate (11/8*)

LEADING TRAINERS AT ROYAL ASCOT – SEVEN YEAR STUDY:

30 winners—Aidan O'Brien
18 winners—John Gosden
12 winners—Sir Michael Stoute

SEVEN YEAR RECORDS AT ROYAL ASCOT RELATING TO DAY ONE:

Leading trainer during the period on the opening day of the meeting:

6 winners—Aidan O'Brien (20/1, 15/2, 5/1, 4/1*, 13/8* & 8/15*)
3 winners—Willie Mullins (8/1, 5/1* & 4/1*)

Average Placepot dividend at Royal Ascot: £522.47

Placepot favourite stats – 45 in total – 15 winners – 10 placed – 20 unplaced

SEVEN YEAR ROYAL ASCOT STATS FOR DAY TWO OF THE MEETING:

Leading trainer during the period on the second day:

4 winners—John Gosden (11/1, 8/1, 11/2 &



Aidan O'Brien

11/4*)
4 winners—Aidan O'Brien (20/1, 9/2*, 9/4 & 4/5*)

Average Placepot dividend at Royal Ascot: £1,141.40

Placepot favourite stats – 46 in total – 14 winners – 10 placed – 22 unplaced

SEVEN YEAR ROYAL ASCOT STATS FOR DAY THREE OF THE MEETING:

Represented Leading trainers today relating to Day 3:

8 winners—Aidan O'Brien (14/1, 12/1, 10/1, 10/1, 15/8*, 11/8*, 10/11* & 10/11*)
3 winners—Saeed Bin Suroor (6/1, 9/2 & 4/1*)

Average Placepot dividend at Royal Ascot: £1,040.44

Placepot favourite stats – 45 in total – 12 winners – 12 placed – 21 unplaced

SEVEN YEAR ROYAL ASCOT STATS FOR DAY FOUR OF THE MEETING:

Represented Leading trainers today relating to Day 4:

7 winners—John Gosden (12/1, 12/1, 12/1, 11/2, 3/1*, 11/4* & 7/4*)

6 winners—Aidan O'Brien (33/1, 16/1, 5/2*, 5/4*, 5/6* & 4/9*)

Average Placepot dividend at Royal Ascot: £649.29

Placepot favourite stats – 45 in total – 13 winners – 12 placed – 20 unplaced

SEVEN YEAR ROYAL ASCOT STATS FOR DAY FIVE OF THE MEETING:

Represented Leading trainers today relating to the final day:

6 winners—Sir Michael Stoute (12/1, 10/1, 8/1, 3/1*, 11/4* & 7/4*)

6 winners—Aidan O'Brien (7/1, 9/2, 5/2*, 11/8*, 8/11* & 4/6*)

Average Placepot dividend at Royal Ascot: £522.47

Placepot favourite stats – 45 in total – 15 winners – 10 placed – 20 unplaced

RECORD OF TRAINERS IN THE RELEVANT 42 JUVENILE RACES AT ROYAL ASCOT BETWEEN 2011 & 2017 (INCLUSIVE):

10 winners—Aidan O'Brien (Includes five winning favourites & winners at 20/1, 16/1, 14/1, 12/1 & 5/1)



John Gosden

+ 9 placed runners (Prices ranging between 7/4* & 14/1)
 4 winners: Wesley A Ward (4/1, 7/2*, 5/2* & 2/1*)
 + 3 Placed (16/1, 7/1 & 10/11*)
 3 winners: John Gosden (20/1, 10/1 & 7/4*)
 + 1 placed (7/2)
 2 winners—Richard Hannon (8/1 & 4/1*)
 + 7 placed (between 11/8* & 14/1)
 2 winners—Kevin Ryan (14/1 & 6/1)
 + 3 placed (14/1, 12/1 & 17/2)
 2—winners—Clive Cox (5/1 & 4/1)
 + mention in despatches for Mark Johnston (one 6/1 winner & five placed horses at 20/1, 12/1, 12/1, 10/1 & 8/1) & the relatively new trainer Charlie Appleby, who saddled the winner (16/1) and runner up (12/1) in last year's 'Windsor Castle'.

Race by race - Best records during the seven year study period:

Coventry Stakes (Tuesday):
 3 winners—Aidan O'Brien (20/1, 4/1 & 13/8*)
 Windsor Castle Stakes (Tuesday):
 7 different trainers
 Queen Mary Stakes (Wednesday):
 2 winners—Wesley A Ward (5/2* & 2/1*)
 Norfolk Stakes (Thursday):
 2 winners—Aidan O'Brien (14/1 & 12/1)
 Albany Stakes (Friday):
 7 different trainers
 Chesham Stakes (Saturday):
 3 winners—Aidan O'Brien (5/2*, 11/8* & 10/11*)

**ROYAL ASCOT RACE TRENDS
 BY MIKE FRANCIS
 DAY 1**

**QUEEN ANNE STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Stick with horses aged four and five
 Horses win a win over a mile fare best
 Look for previous Group 1 winners
 Richard Hannon and Aidan O'Brien have a strong record

**COVENTRY STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Stick with last-time-out winners
 This isn't usually race for outsiders, stick with single-figure prices
 Look for horses with one or two previous runs
 A win over 6f has been an advantage

**KING'S STAND STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Stick with horses aged no more than six
 A win over 5f is pretty much a must
 Previous Group-race winners do well
 Look for horses that were first or second last time out
 Foreign runners have a good record

**ST JAMES'S PALACE STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Look for Group 1 winners
 Stick with horses who have already run two or three times this season
 Distance winners have a good record
 The Irish 2,000 Guineas is a strong pointer

**ASCOT STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Look for horses with a recent run
 Horses aged four and five do well
 National Hunt trainers have a strong record
 Stick with runners that have won over at least 2,

**WINDSOR CASTLE STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Look for horses with two or three runs under their belt
 Stick with runners who at least placed last time
 A distance win is important
 Favourites have a poor record

**DAY TWO
 JERSEY STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Your hope must have run already this season
 Ideally run at least four times in their career
 Look for distance winners
 Winning at least a Listed race before is a plus

**QUEEN MARY STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Stick with horses that were first or second last time, winners all the better
 A win over 5f is a must
 Look for horses with one-three runs this season
 Outsiders can win

**DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Look for horses that have won over at least a mile
 A win at Group 3 level or better is important
 Must have run at least once this season
 Stick with horses that were in the frame last time
 Four-year-olds have a good record

**PRINCE OF WALES'S STAKES
 KEY TRENDS**

Distance winners have a good record
 Four and five-year-olds fare much the best
 Past Group 1 win is important
 Ideally have been in the first three last time

**ROYAL HUNT CUP
 KEY TRENDS**

Stick with distance winners
 Four and five-year-olds do well
 It's hard to carry more than 9st 11lb
 8/1 shortest winning price since 2009
 High numbers best in draw

**SANDRINGHAM HANDICAP
 KEY TRENDS**

Look for horses that won over 7f or further
 Stick with higher weights - over 8st 11lb
 Two-four runs this season is ideal

ROYAL ASCOT TRENDS GUIDE



Being placed last time is a plus

DAY THREE

NORFOLK STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Distance win is a must

This is not a race for debutants

Last time winners do well

Favourites have a modest record

HAMPTON COURT STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Look for horses that were first or second last time

Should have run at least twice this season

A distance win is a positive

Past five runnings have gone to a fancied horse

RIBBLESDALE STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Stick with horses that were placed last time

A win over 1m2f or further is a positive
Horses with two or more runs this season do well

Favourites have a poor record

ASCOT GOLD CUP

KEY TRENDS

Look for horses that have won over 2m

or further

A previous Group 1 win is an advantage

No more than two runs this season

Last-time winners have a good record

BRITANNIA STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Look for winners over 7f or a mile

Being second or third last time is a plus but not a win

Horses carrying less than 9st do well

Only three of past 15 favourites have won

KING GEORGE V HANDICAP

KEY TRENDS

Look for horses with two-four runs this season

Being placed last time out is a big plus

Carrying more than 8st 13lb is tough

Horses with a win over 1m2f or more do well

DAY FOUR

ALBANY STAKES

KEY TRENDS

A top-three finish last time is important, a win all the better

Look for horses with one or two career runs

A double-figure draw is a plus

Having their first run at Ascot

KING EDWARD VII STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Look for horses with at least two runs this season

A top-three finish last time is a plus

A win over 1m2f before is a bonus

Only one recent winner at double-figure price

COMMONWEALTH CUP

Only three previous runnings

CORONATION STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Look for horses that have won over 7f or further

A Group 1 or Group 2 win is a plus

Don't worry if your fancy was unplaced last time

One or two runs this season is ideal

QUEEN'S VASE

KEY TRENDS

Stick with horses that were placed last time

Must have won over at least 1m4f

Two or more past wins is a plus

A double-figure draw is a negative

DUKE OF EDINBURGH HANDICAP

KEY TRENDS

Stick with four or five-year-olds

Winner usually carries more than 9st

A win over 1m2f or further is important

Being placed last time is a plus

DAY FIVE

CHESHAM STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Horses having their second career run do well

Being placed last time is important

Running over 6f last time is a good pointer

Foaling date earlier than March is also important

WOLFERTON HANDICAP

KEY TRENDS

Four-year-olds have good record

One-three runs this season is ideal

Carrying more than 8st 11lb a plus

Being unplaced last time is not a negative

HARDWICKE STAKES

KEY TRENDS

Distance winners have a good record



A Group 2 or Group 3 win is a plus
Being placed last time is important
Four-year-olds have won past five run-
nings

DIAMOND JUBILEE STAKES
KEY TRENDS

A distance win is important
Five-year-olds and younger do well
A previous Group-race win is a plus
Winning last time out is a negative

WOKINGHAM STAKES
KEY TRENDS

Must have won over 6f
Four runs this season is the limit
A recent run is a plus
Four and five-year-olds do best
Carrying less than 9st 3lb is important
Finished in the first six last time out

QUEEN ALEXANDRA STAKES

No strong trends — but:
It's not a negative to have been
unplaced last time out
A win over 2m or more on the Flat is a
plus **RA**

MAL BOYLE

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O'BRIEN'S WARRIOR SPIRIT

2,000 Guineas hero is aimed at first Triple Crown since Nijinsky in 1970

A IDAN O'BRIEN has confirmed that Saxon Warrior is being aimed at the Classic Triple Crown after his runaway win in the 2,000 Guineas.

Despite fears that the mile would be too sharp, he was impressive when scoring under Donnacha O'Brien and it's all systems go for Epsom.

Should he come out on top there, the St Leger at Doncaster will be his next target — as he bids to be the first

Triple Crown winner since Nijinsky in 1970. O'Brien said: "If there's a chance we had a Triple Crown horse, this was always going to be the horse."

"That's why we started him off in the Guineas. We are still alive and kicking after the first round."

O'Brien could have as many as six runners in the Blue Riband on June 2. Kew Gardens, Delano Roosevelt and The Pentagon are being aimed at the race, while James Cook and Zabriskie are other Ballydoyle possibles. **RA**



WARRIOR

Saxon Warrior and
Donnacha O'Brien win
the 2,000 Guineas

HUNT FOR NEXT YEAR'S CLASSIC WINNERS

Ian Heitman with his latest report on racing's younger generation

The Flat season has really got going over the last few weeks with the first two Classics of the year providing very different results for punters. Saxon Warrior maintained his unbeaten record in the 2,000 Guineas winning at 3/1 whilst Billesdon Brook was the longest priced winner of the 1,000 Guineas at 66/1.

Saxon Warrior will head for the Derby as one of the shortest priced favourites since Camelot completed the 2,000 Guineas/Derby double in 2012. Three of the last four horses to start shorter than 2/1 have won the Derby and, while there is a slight stamina concern about Saxon Warrior seeing out the 1m 4f trip, his dam Maybe was fifth in the 2012 Oaks, the only time she raced over the Derby distance, he should be very hard to beat on June 2.

Billesdon Brook had eight starts as a two-year-old winning three times, her best performance coming with victory in the Group 3 Prestige Stakes at Goodwood in August. She was only rated 99 going into the 1000 Guineas but won decisively, with three Group 1 winners filling the places behind her. It was a first Group 1 success at the 47th attempt for Sean Levey and given the manner of Billesdon Brook's win, there should be more to come with the Coronation Stakes at Royal Ascot a likely target.

Billesdon Brook's trainer Richard Hannon has made a good start to the season with his two-year-olds with a couple of first time out winners already, HUA HIN at Nottingham on April 21st and IT'S THE ONLY WAY at Brighton on April 24th. It's The Only Way followed up the debut win at Kempton seven days later, giving weight to his nine rivals, leading all the way and easy beating UN SHAMA from the Richard Hughes yard by two and a quarter lengths.

The previous issue was written just before the Craven meeting and there were two good two-year-old races held there on the first two days of the meeting. JACKSTAR was well supported prior to making a winning debut for Tom Dascombe in the novice race on day one, beating hard-pulling YNYS MON and VAN BEETHOVEN comfortably. A strong colt by Dark Angel, Jackstar should be making his mark in good races this summer.

The maiden fillies race saw STRINGS OF LIFE get up close home and provide Charlie Appleby with a winner from his first two-year-old runner of the year and a first winner for his sire Slade Power. KADIZ and COTUBANAMA finished second and third and they had their next starts in the fillies conditions race at Salisbury Billesdon Brook had finished fourth in on her debut 12 months earlier.

Run on heavy ground, 10 fillies lined up with GINGER NUT (fourth at Newmarket) and debutant DIVINER the 7/2 joint favourites. Kadiz was at 4/1 with Cotubanama weak in the betting at 5/1. Ginger Nut went off too quickly on the testing ground and faded to be fourth. Cotubanama raced in midfield and made progress with two furlongs to go, taking the lead inside the last 150 yards and beating HAATS OFF, who finished well from the rear, by a length and three quarters. Kadiz raced up with the pace before weakening out of contention a furlong and a half from the finish. Cotubanama continued the excellent start to 2018 for Mick Channon who was recording his sixth two-year-old winner of the year.

Newbury's first flat meeting of the year on April 20th and 21st was held on good to soft ground with 10 unraced two-year-olds getting the meeting underway over 5f. There was plenty of market support behind WELL DONE FOX for Richard Hannon, but he was very edgy and colty in the paddock beforehand and could finish only fifth, under pressure at halfway and never managing to challenge. The first three horses pulled eight lengths clear of the fourth placed horse. DAVE DEXTER came out on top for Ralph Beckett, getting the better of GLORY FIGHTER and front-runner THEGREATESTSHOW-



MAN.

Glory Fighter had his next start at Lingfield three weeks later when he faced seven rivals on good ground. Amongst his opponents were TIN HAT who had to give 3lb to the other runners having been successful at Brighton on his second start when he beat Swiss Chime in a weak novice median auction contest. KODINAR representing William Haggas had shaped with promise on her debut at Ripon behind Tom Dascombe's LIGHT MY FIRE on April 18th but was unfancied in the betting on this occasion. Glory Fighter was well supported and rewarded his backers with an all-the-way win under Gerald Mosse in two-year-old course record time, always holding the runner-up SOLDIERS CALL who ran a very promising first race for Archie Watson, the pair six lengths clear of Tin Hat in third. Kodinar ran poorly and was sixth.

Dave Dexter ran the following day at Ascot where he took on nine rivals including BLOWN BY WIND who had won impressively on his debut at Windsor but was no match for Kevin Ryan's

newcomer EMARAATY ANA at the same track two weeks later. Saeed bin Suroor saddled his first juvenile of 2018, GREAT RESPECT but he was very noisy in the paddock and never landed a blow finishing last. DARK SHADOW representing in-form Clive Cox was also noisy in the preliminaries and was never better than midfield, dead-heating for sixth place. Blown By Wind was quickly away from the stalls and led throughout, only seriously challenged by Brian Meehan's newcomer AMPLIFY who ran very well at odds of 40/1. Blown By Wind did edge right inside the last furlong but was well on top and won by three quarters of length with Dave Dexter running on to be third but never challenging and Charlie Hills' newcomer MUTAWAFFER running a very promising race to be fourth.

Blown By Wind looks set for a step up in class next time with the Listed National Stakes at Sandown on May 24th an ideal race given his front-running style of racing.

Tim Easterby first-time-out winners are rare, nine since 2013 at a strike rate of

4%. When they do go in at the first time of asking they are usually pretty smart, Wells Farhh Go, won a Group 3 on his second start, and Staxton was Listed placed in 2017 so it's worth taking note of the performance of VINTAGE BRUT who defied odds of 25/1 when he won at Thirsk on April 21st, quickening clear of WASNTEXPECTINGTHAT impressively inside the last furlong to win by seven lengths. The runner-up won next time out and the second and third were both second on their subsequent starts. He could appear next in the Brian Yeardeley Conditions race at Beverley on June 9th before a tilt at a race at Royal Ascot.

The Beverley card also features the Hilary Needler Trophy over 5f and a candidate for this race could be AEROSPHERE who made a winning debut for Bryan Smart at Beverley on April 26th. Ideally drawn in stall 1 against the far side rail, she kept on well inside the last furlong to beat SHUMOOKHI and IMMOKLAE close home. Smart is another trainer who doesn't have a great record first-time-out, only a 6% strike rate, but like his 2016 Group

TALKING TWO-YEAR-OLDS



Fly The Nest

winner, Delectation (also won first-time-out) Aerosphere is owned by Crossfields Racing and they could have a useful prospect on their hands. The fourth placed horse, SIGNORA CABELLO gave the form a boost when she won at Bath on her next start.

Having had to cancel their intended first card in early April due to a waterlogged course, Leicester's first flat meeting of the year was held on April 28th. The ground was still heavy and with steady rain throughout the day, it was hard work for the horses with six two-year-olds facing the starter for a 5f novice event. Only Awake In Asia had the benefit of a previous run, second at Windsor to Blown By Wind, he was only fourth in the market despite that racecourse experience. BAREND BOY, the first runner of the year for Hugo Palmer, was the 9/4 favourite with the yard having won the corresponding race for the two previous years. TRUE MASON representing Karl Burke was supported into second favouritism and he was

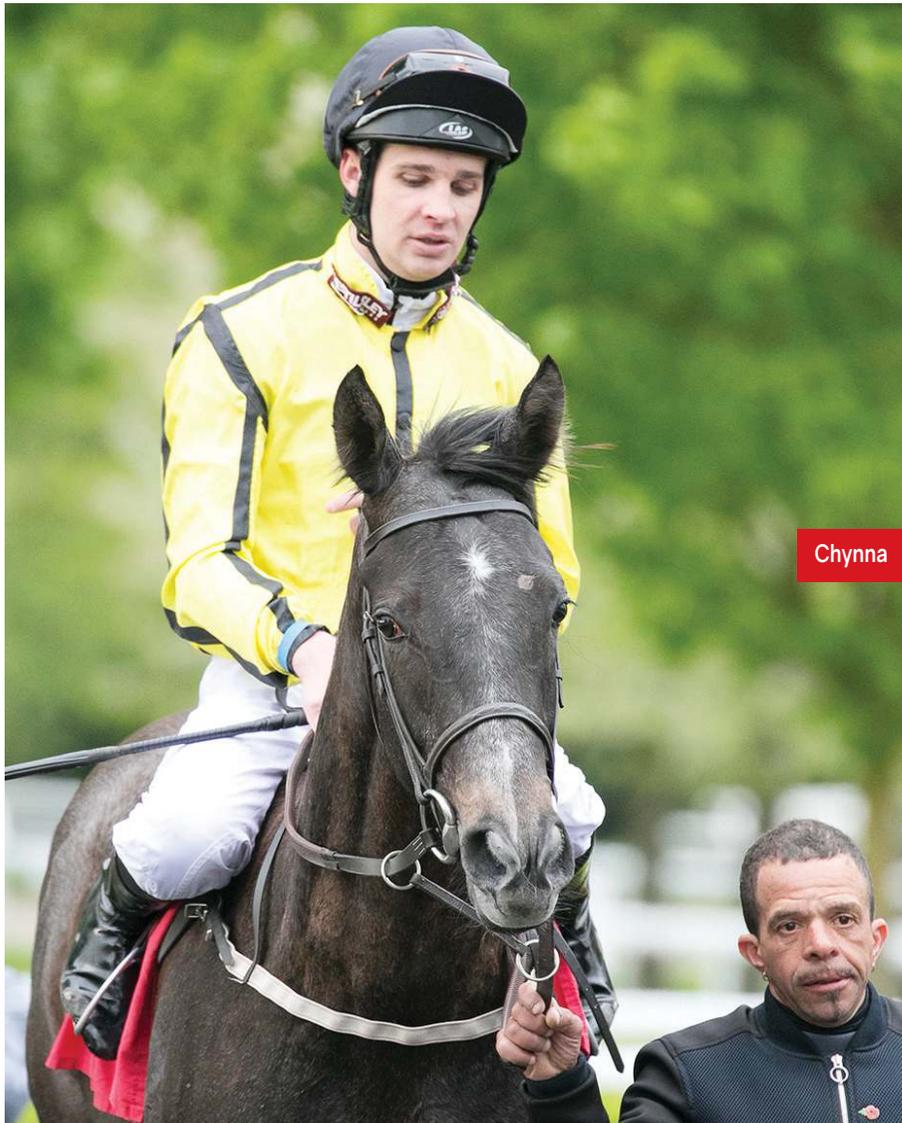
prominent for a long way before getting tired and faded into fourth. He is a strong colt and will progress on faster ground next time. Victory went to MARIE'S DIAMOND for Mark Johnston and champion jockey Silvestre de Sousa, he raced in touch with the pace, took the lead a furlong and a half from the finish and kept on well beating Barend Boy by a length and a quarter. Bred to stay much further, this was a promising debut win for Marie's Diamond who has the scope to progress throughout the year.

Barend Boy looked to have improved a lot in just eight days for his next start on 1000 Guineas day at Newmarket, May 6th. This time he was the only one of the six runners with racecourse experience with runners from powerful yards, Charlie Appleby, William Haggas, Richard Hannon and Clive Cox all represented. It was the Cox runner, KONCHEK, who was sent off the 2/1 favourite having been available at 12/1 when betting opened the evening

before the race. A strong colt by Lethal Force, he looked in good shape for his racecourse debut as too did FANAAR representing Haggas and FLY THE NEST representing Appleby.

Fly The Nest took the field along with Barend Boy on terms with the pace and Konчек racing close up. Fanaar took a strong hold under Jim Crowley in behind the pace but travelled well from halfway. Konчек travelled strongly for Adam Kirby and he made his move with a couple of furlongs to go. Konчек didn't handle the downhill part of the track that well but still took the lead over a furlong from the finish, carrying Fly The Nest to the right but was well on top at the line winning by a length and three quarters with plenty in hand. He looked like a Royal Ascot candidate here with the Group 2 Norfolk Stakes the ideal race for him, a race Cox won in 2012 with Reckless Abandon who went straight to Royal Ascot after winning his first start.

This race should produce winners



Chynna

with Fanaar sure to go well next time, Haggas has a 28% strike rate with his two-year-olds having their second starts.

Konchek was the second debut winner of the week for the Cox yard, GETCHAGETCHAGETCHA made a winning debut at Ascot on May 2nd. Only four runners took part in a conditions race with Aidan O'Brien's THE IRISH RIVER going off at odds of 1/7 on his second start. He reared as the stalls opened and lost five lengths to his three rivals. He was allowed to get into his stride by Ryan Moore and made progress with two furlongs to go, keeping on well inside the last furlong but unable to get to Getchagetcha who had taken the lead with a furlong to go and just managed to hang on by a nose from VIKIVAKI. Half a length cov-

ered the four runners at the line and whilst it would be easy to say the form doesn't amount to much, they were a nice-looking bunch in the paddock with Getchagetcha looking the one who most needed the experience. The Irish River is sure to win races this season and a return trip to the Royal meeting is likely to be on the cards following a maiden success.

Mick Channon has had his string in fine form this spring and currently leads the way for number of two-year-old winners. BIG BOOTS added to the total when he won a 5f maiden at Bath on May 2nd beating Clive Cox's well backed favourite HIGH HORSE by two lengths. He was purchased at the Ascot Breeze-Up Sales and was the first of a couple of winners to have been purchased at Breeze-Up sales this spring,

ROCKIN ROY won on debut for Archie Watson at Beverley on May 7th having breezed at Newmarket in April.

BARBILL became the fourth winning newcomer from the Channon yard of 2018 when he also made a winning debut at Bath on May 7th. Travelling strongly on the outside of the field, Barbill made progress to lead a furlong from the finish and ran on strongly to win by four lengths from Ginger Nut who lasted longer than she had done at Salisbury with Five Amarones in third. Barbill was foaled on May 8th so was just a day short of his second birthday and there is plenty of scope for improvement over further in the coming months.

A Channon two-year-old who didn't really build on their promising debut was CHYNNA, fifth behind Strings Of Life at Newmarket. She was the 9/4 favourite for a novice fillies race at Kempton on May 1st. She could manage only third behind impressive debut winner ON THE STAGE, a strong filly by Swiss Spirit trained by Ed Walker who was the yard's first winning two-year-old newcomer since October 2016 (47 runners since the last winner).

Chester's May meeting began with the Lily Agnes Conditions race over 5f and with four of the intended 11 runners taken out of the race, NO LIPPY was the 6/5 favourite to add to her debut win at Doncaster 11 days earlier. She led all the way under PJ McDonald and was always holding the runner-up LIHOU in the short straight winning by a length and a quarter. A strong filly by Oasis Dream, No Lippy could line up in the first Listed race of the year for the two-year-olds, the Marygate Stakes at York on May 18th where she will be very hard to beat. If she does bypass that race, the Group 2 Queen Mary at Royal Ascot will be on the agenda however the Mark Johnston yard has only won one Royal Ascot two-year-old contest in the last 10 years from 56 runners, Buratino in the 2015 Coventry Stakes.

The maiden on the second day of the

TALKING TWO-YEAR-OLDS

meeting went to WEDDING DATE from the Richard Hannon yard who stepped up on his second place to JAMES WATT at Brighton earlier in the month, winning easily by three lengths from Yns Mon with Finaoh running better than he had done at Leicester in third.

Clive Cox's excellent start to 2018 continued at Ascot when he saddled SHADES OF BLUE to make a winning debut (third of the season) in the fillies maiden on May 11th from favourite QUEEN OF BERMUDA and second favourite COME ON LEICESTER (both expensive breeze-up purchases) trained by William Haggas and Richard Hannon respectively. Shades Of Blue raced in midfield but picked up impressively inside the last furlong, taking the lead with 75 yards to go and running out a comfortable length and a quarter winner. A strong filly by leading two-year-old stallion Kodiak, Shades Of Blue will no doubt be aimed at the Queen Mary Stakes at Royal Ascot, a race the yard won in 2017 with Heartache. This is a race that will produce plenty of winners next time, both the second and third are useful looking fillies and the fourth, SATISFYING, showed plenty of pace on her debut for Richard Hughes.

Aidan O'Brien's first-time-out strike rate since 2013 is 14.5% but his strike rate second-time-out is 35% and two of the horses that were beaten on their debut's, SERGEI PROKOFIEV and VAN BEETHOVEN both added to the impressive second-time-out record in the past few weeks.

Sergei Prokofiev looks tailor-made for the Coventry Stakes following his impressive win at Navan on April 23rd. Always going strongly, he took the lead a furlong and a half from the finish and ran on well to win by seven and a half lengths from debut winner PRIDE OF PIMLICO. O'Brien has won 10 two-year-old races at Royal Ascot in the last 10 years from 51 runners, three of which were in the Coventry Stakes and the 9/2 about Sergei Prokofiev looks good value.

Van Beethoven had finished strongly in third behind Jackstar at Newmarket's Craven meeting and he made no mis-



take at Naas on May 7th, leading all the way, he only had to be pushed out by Ryan Moore to record a three and a half length win over CALIFORNIA DADDY who kept on well with O'Brien's NORTH WIND shaping with plenty of promise in third on his debut.

FAIRYLAND got O'Brien and Moore off the perfect start at Naas in the opening 6f fillies maiden, racing up with the pace, she took the lead inside the last furlong and pushed clear to win by a length and three quarters from MINTD who had the benefit of previous race-course experience. Fairyland cost 925,000 as a yearling and will surely be aimed at the Albany Stakes, a race O'Brien won in 2016 with Brave Anna.

Wesley Ward will no doubt have plenty of runners at Royal Ascot as he has done in previous years, 37 two-year-old runners at the Royal Meeting in the last 10 years and six winners (all over 5f, Norfolk once, Queen Mary three times and Windsor Castle twice) and given the way his juveniles have per-

formed so far in the US, 10 winners at the Keeneland meeting in April and winners at Aqueduct and Belmont in New York he is sure to be well represented.

One of the winners who looked particularly impressive was OUR PASSION, his only turf winner, at Belmont on May 3rd. Like most of the Ward winner's she was out smartly from the gates and led all the way, strongly pressed inside the last furlong. She could appear in the Queen Mary Stakes.

WHAT THE LUCK was impressive winning at Aqueduct in mid-April, drawing clear inside the last furlong but he hasn't raced since.

Other trainers with good Royal Ascot records are John Gosden, four winners from 14 runners but yet to have a two-year-old runner at the time of writing and Kevin Ryan, two winners, three seconds from 19 runners and has a useful prospect in Emaraty Ana given the manner of his debut win at Windsor and the franking of the form by Blown By Wind at Ascot. **RA**

DADDY OF ALL SYSTEMS

Eddie names three sires and says follow their progeny for winners

There is always a reason for investing in a particular horse, providing that you have applied logic and sound principles to your selection process. But would you ever back two horses in the same race? Many people shy away from this concept because they say you will always lose one stake. But the point is sound logic will often prevail. Your strike-rate of winners will increase and isn't that what we want; more winners and profit?

In the mid to late 1970's I was very interested in the pedigree of racehorses, particularly National Hunt sires and their progeny. I found a table which showed how many of the sire's progeny had ran in the last five seasons and the strike-rate for those winners. I thought that a sire could have more wins than the actual number of individual horses contesting these races. Therefore, there could be a very good chance of increasing your bank balance.

I chose the sires Bivouac, Londoner and Midsummer Night II. My win strike-rate and the return on my investments increased every season. I would readily recommend this methodology to any aspiring horseracing investor. The son of one of these money-making sires caught my eye and I backed him whenever I felt the race conditions were in his favour.

During my second season of backing the progeny of these sires, I decided to include another factor in my betting strategy; speed ratings. Not many horseracing scribes or, less proportionately, horseracing backers, seem to fully appreciate the wisdom of this strategy. The name of the game in National Hunt Chases and Hurdle races is to jump the obstacles in front of you. If you can do that safely and at speed, a sire's progeny will win more races than they lose. This was the case with my triumvirate of sire's progeny.

I spoke at great length with my friends and other close associates about this principle. They appreciated the value of the information I gave them. I cannot be sure that three modern sires that I am going to give to you today will produce the triumphs of my original trio. But, it is likely that the number of winners you back will considerably increase.

In those days, the methods I used were very profitable. But today I have greater knowledge of other factors that can impinge and, often, improve one's strike-rate. I will also share these advantages with you today.

The first is to ensure the statistics of the chosen sires produce profitability in all race categories. If they don't, then concentrate on the horses that contest in profitable race categories and con-

sider other performance-affecting factors, particularly the state of the going and the courses the progeny are contesting.

The better performers will be successful at the various festival meetings, such as Cheltenham, Leopardstown and Punchestown. But don't write off those that run in less prodigious company. The sires that I have given you will mainly produce a class of horse that can win on most tracks.

If one wants a good meal, then one goes to the best restaurants. So, remember that the taste of victory is particularly sweet. The names of my magnificent trio are Network (GER,) Shantou (USA) and Westerner. We support the progeny of all three sires in chases, but only Shantou (USA) in hurdles as well.

But you must explore the tracks that they are most suited to, the distance that suits their progeny the best and the type of class that the prolific winners come from. Next month, I will look at the statistics of the Racing Post's regular feature "Today's Flat Sires" and their importance to horseracing investors. I will also be happy to answer any questions concerning breeding issues and their performances on the track. Those that I don't know the answers to, I will research with due diligence and report back to you next month. **RA**

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

Ben Morgan wishes he'd had the bottle to stick with Billesdon Brook – so do we!

It's been a long winter waiting for Kerry Lee's Magic Dancer to reappear. He was highly progressive in the autumn on a sound surface where he racked up two wins at Kempton and Cheltenham before running an admirable race in what used to be the Ladbroke on ground plenty slow enough for him.

A pipe opener in the midst of Storm Emma in a jumpers bumper blew away the cobwebs and I was mighty confident about his chances as he lined up at Cheltenham in the middle of April. Horses such as Capitaine and Forth Bridge meant he only had 10st 11lb on his back and with Dickie Patrick's 5lb claim taken into consideration I couldn't have him beat.

I piled in £30 each way at 6/1 in the hope that this was the bet that changed my fortunes after a month of two of being not quite at my best.

They went a decent pace which suited my fellow and as they straightened up for home I began to do some magical dancing of my own. He latched onto the leader's shoulder jumping the last and when Patrick said go he settled the race in a matter of strides. An extremely satisfactory result which rewarded my patience and put me back in the game.

However, the 2018 1,000 Guineas will be remembered as an incredibly dark punting day for myself. Believe me or not but I really fancied Richard Hannon's Billesdon Brook in the 1,000



Guineas and even gave her as a tip to someone in the week leading up to the Guineas. But when it came to writing my Sunday column for *The Racing Paper*, Racing Ahead's sister weekly newspaper, I read that Hannon, usually pretty bullish if he thinks one of his has a chance, said he wasn't so sure about her chances and preferred Anna Nerium of his pair, which planted a large seed of doubt in my mind.

I initially latched on to her last season when she won at Goodwood in the most impressive fashion. I thought her run in the Nell Gwyn was pleasing as I

thought she ran well before tiring in the final furlong, but my mind was now telling me she didn't stay the mile. She opened up at 66/1 which made me think to myself, if I tip this horse at 66/1 and duly wax lyrical about it being the bet of the century and it trails home last then I would be laughed all the way off newsagent shelves up and down the country.

So I committed the cardinal sin and changed my mind and tipped eventual second, Laurens (£15 e/w). Although, being the despicable person that I am, I put a pound each way on Billesdon Brook and felt immediately ashamed of chickening out.

There was a split second where it looked like I made the right call as Laurens was finding more and more on the front end but it was almost as if I could hear Sean Levey say to me in his thick Irish accent "forgot about me didn't you" as he ranged up on the outside on the bridle. Of course she went on to win in the manner of a very smart filly and I wanted to tell the world "I tipped it, I backed it!!" but as I opened the Twitter app up on my phone, I caught a glimpse of myself in the reflection of my screen and stopped myself from becoming "that person".

Scrolling through Twitter, seeing some of Britain's finest judges explain the result as unpredictable was emotional reading but a fair punishment which I deserved.

Patience is perhaps the theme of the



BEN'S BEST BETS

SCHNABEL - Won with a bit in hand on his return, should strip fitter next time and still has plenty of mileage left in his current mark.

TRIBUTE ACT - Looked to carry a bit of condition at Ascot so should be better next time. Still performed admirably and will win her fair share of races in the coming months.

KONCHEK - Clive Cox has the best bunch of two-year-olds I've seen so far and I think this fellow is somewhere near the best of them. Wherever he runs at Ascot he should be followed.

Konchek

column this month. I've followed Cut The Corner for a long time now as he is a consistent admirable performer who just needed a little bit of luck. He lined up at Newton Abbot race fit and ready to go in against some classy rivals. They were giving him plenty of weight and I couldn't have him out of the frame. At 9/1 he was far too big and £15 each way was duly placed on him.

The nature of Newton Abbot suited him as he had the pace and agility to handle the tight turns and there was never a moment where Lee Edwards looked in trouble. Turning in, he had Sizing Platinum in his sights and all he had to do was jump the last two. He did, and secured another satisfactory pay day which proved sometimes there is a lovely, soft mattress waiting at the bottom of a cliff.

Just 24 hours later, Schnabel lined up at Wincanton. David Dennis' horse progressed nicely during the autumn and certainly looked a horse to follow when chasing home two smart rivals at Doncaster. Those two rivals are both now

rated in the 130's but Schnabel was only on 112 so I made him a certainty next time he ran, but connections made me wait.

He was declared a few times prior to his run at Wincanton but was pulled out due to the ground which suggested Dennis had him spot on to win on his return otherwise he would have given him a spin on good to soft ground.

A £20 each way wager at 7/1 looked sensible as he had top weight, but half way round I wish I put my house on. He pinged every hurdle, genuinely never touched a twig before easing up to the leaders' hind turning in. James King kept hold of him for as long as he could and committed him before the last. He again pinged the last and the race was over, the official winning margin was 2 ¼ lengths but he was worth so much more and I urge readers to keep him on side.

While I was preaching about patience to anyone who would listen, I was also enjoying a profitable Chester May festival. No Lippy (£20 win) got me off to a

good start and she now looks to be a big player at Royal Ascot. Austrian School (£20 win) was impressive as he battled his way to victory over a trip and track which was plenty sharp enough. He is one to keep on side once he is stepped back up in distance and I can see him developing into a smart stayer in time.

Very rarely do I write one of these columns and not mention Time To Study (£30 e/w). Although I lost nothing as he finished in the places in the Chester Cup I couldn't help but feel he should have finished a lot closer. The horses that finished in front of him, made their move early before turning for home, whilst Franny Norton who rides Chester so well normally, sat tight. He lost four or five places turning in and by the time he got going his chance was gone. I have a horrible feeling he is going to win of these big ones when I least expect it.

The Flat season is well under way now and I hope to move through the gears next month as we enjoy the biggest week of the season. **RA**

ENDING IN THE SUNSHINE

Scrapper signs off for the season wondering where all the horses are

LARKHILL APRIL 21ST

Every race this afternoon was run under a different sky. We had the full gamut from stormy to blazing sunshine. They were running here on extremely fast ground, while 60 miles away at Littlewindsor the meeting was abandoned because the track was waterlogged. Is it any wonder we British are so obsessed with the weather?

Due to the ground, it wasn't a surprise that the field sizes shrunk as the card

progressed with horses kept in their lorries. Foxworthy's win in the Open Maiden was truly incredible.

The start was a complete farce. The starter aborted the first attempt; he then asked them to turn as they had a second go. Suddenly, with half the field facing the wrong way, he dropped his flag. Foxworthy, along with Hello Jazz, suffered the most. For a while it looked as if rider Will Biddick was having second thoughts as to whether it was

worth racing, by the time the partnership got to the first they were almost 100 yards behind the leader Sinour.

Biddick kept a cool head and helped by his mount's slick jumping picked off his rivals one by one. Left in front at the third last, Foxworthy came home with his head in his chest. The gelding is far too good to continue Pointing and will be going racing next season in the back of a Nicky Henderson horsebox.

An hour later Different Gravey won the Men's Open, giving Biddick, trainer Ed Walker and owners Mr and Mrs Kelvin-Hughes doubles. The bay has made the opposite career move. Now unbeaten in three points, this time last year Henderson was saddling him up at Aintree to take on Yanworth in a Grade One hurdle.

Biddick went on to land a treble when steering home Sixteen Letters in the young horse maiden. Normally, I'd imagine, a rider who has just completed a hat trick returns to the changing rooms with their chests puffed out with pride. Probably not today, the multiple times champion had delayed proceedings by going to the wrong start. He's only had the three or four hundred rides here.

PARHAM APRIL 28TH

A deeply worrying weekend. Up to and including Easter roughly 40% of the meetings had been sunk in the mud, postponed or cancelled. Across the





Different Gravey (centre) beats Quedillac (left) and Sidbury Hill (right)

nation, I imagined, there were owners and trainers desperate to find some action for their brave steeds. Boy, was I wrong!

There were a dozen cards held over the two days; only five achieved a race with a double-figure field. The Berkeley meeting at Woodford is renowned for the quality and depth of its Maidens, spectators have become accustomed to seeing good young horses introduced there. Yesterday, the three miler was a match between two nine year olds who between them had had 21 attempts at breaking their ducks.

The new course at Edgcote received rave reviews from spectators but got just 26 entries on a card that included two matches and a walkover.

At Balcormo there was a mid-card gap as nobody declared for the Intermediate.

Trebudannon's disappointing programme contained a match and two

three-runner contests. Bitterley had a match, as did Knightwick at their first ever meeting. Garthorpe's first three races raised only five runners between them.

Before the season started I feared there would not be enough horses to sustain the 179 fixtures. There appears far too few to even satisfy a list that has been dramatically shrunken by the rain. The people that run Pointing are going to have to make some big and important decisions this summer if they are to stop the decline of the sport.

Parham gathered 45 gallant gallopers. They did their damndest to warm a crowd shivering in the cold and damp. The outsider Jackfield provided the shock of the day by taking the Ladies Open under young Beth Mellish.

Generous Ransom mugged the area's leading horse Glint Of Steel right on the line pinching the trophy for the Conditions.

I've had Conkies Lad down as one to avoid for a while now but he outstayed Woodfleet to land the Mens' Open.

The finale, the Restricted, saw Taking The Mickey living down to his inglorious moniker by refusing at the last when holding a five lengths lead.

My dad phoned Wednesday night. He's 87. "What time are you going out in the morning?" He didn't wait for the answer. "I want you to phone me at seven. Make sure I'm up. I've got to be at a funeral at Mortlake at ten. It's for a bloke I used to play bowls with, you didn't know him".

Next evening I phoned Dad. "How did it go?"

"The traffic through Hammersmith was terrible, solid, I got there at five past ten. The last couple of people were just going in, I squeezed through as they were shutting the doors."

"Do you know what time his funeral was?" Dad continued. "Quarter to one! I



Itchymeim'scratch

sat in on eight services!"

Through my laughter I questioned if anybody had asked who he was or how he had known the deceased.

"No. Some of them were very sorry affairs, with only a few turning up. I didn't take my fags; I was dying for a snout. I shot straight home afterwards, I didn't go for a drink afterwards."

"What! To none of them?"

HACKWOOD PARK MAY 5TH

News came through on Thursday that today's meeting would be the last ever at the track. The estate, which sits on the opposite bank of the M3 to Basingstoke, was put up for sale with a price tag of £65 million a couple of years ago and the lease for the racecourse is not being renewed. Planning permission is being sought for a service station and a hotel.

The bookmakers have, rightly, been taking plenty of flack recently for the greedy overrounds they have been betting to. The seven standing here must have registered themselves as charities during the week. Generous would be an understatement, at one time they were betting to 95%.

Punters who'd backed Itchymeim'scratch in the curtain raiser, the Novice

Riders and Starkie in the following Ladies Open were stopped in their tracks as they raced to beat the paying out queues. Both winners cleared the last five clear with apparently plenty left in the tanks, only for their engines to begin to splutter and cough halfway up the long run-in. The pair managed to just keep their bumpers in front as they passed the chequered flag.

There may have been a slight question mark about the quickish ground but evens about Templebraden in the 3m4f looked an absolute steal. He jumped to his left, as he is always liable to do, and he had to be kept up to his work over the final mile but could be called the winner throughout.

Kalinate stormed clear in the Open maiden but I wouldn't get too carried away, he in all probability, beat a poor lot.

Kinlochspelve won the mares Maiden, which looked an even weaker affair.

The honour of the last horse to grace the winner's enclosure at Hackwood Park went to Changeofluck who conclusively took the Members Conditions. It may only be a temporary title; as the word on the course was that not all hope is lost in finding a resolution to the lease problem.

Two jockeys took crashing falls during the evening's sport. Charlie Marshall looked to have done a shoulder; Paddy O'Connor appeared to suffer a head or neck injury. I drove home with my fingers tightly crossed.

ALDINGTON MAY 6TH

We only had 29 runners here; if the horses had walked the course before racing, instead of the jockeys, we'd have got a good few less. The ground was sticky and the grass and the temperatures high. It promised to be hard work.

The commentator surmised "it must be Christmas Day for the ice cream sellers!"

As long as they'd remembered to pack the sun lotion, I don't think the young and boisterous crowd had any complaints. We were treated to some marvellously exciting sport, despite the small fields, with some wonderfully varied entertainment in between races.

I spoke to Charlie Marshall before the action got underway; he had his arm in a sling following yesterday's fall. "It's not the shoulder I injured last time," he told me, "it's the one that keeps going!"

He's going to get it sorted. It cost him two winners.

Charlie fared better than poor Paddy

O'Connor who broke his back in two places. My best wishes go out to him and his young family.

The opening maiden race was a thriller with four in the air over the last. It became five as Shane Roche was spectacularly unshipped from the favourite Writingsonthewall.

Dontdillydally took advantage of the departure, pipping Winola in the very last stride. I can't make my mind up if she's a bit of a madam or stark raving mad, it always looks even money that she jumps off or not. It helps if she is running in her own area; a friendly starter is always likely to be more patient and obliging.

Grayhawk went off odds on for the Restricted, he'd have been an awful lot shorter going to the second last. But he flattered to deceive and looked to be outbattled by the winner Cada Club up the run-in.

In the Ladies Open, Hazy Tom was another horse to be travelling sweetly up the home straight, but this course and surface were always likely to test his suspect stamina and he was readily outstayed by the favourite Don't Do Mondays. The winner was ridden by Major Louise Burnell, who is now two from two for the season, the partnership following up last month's victory at High Easter. Speaking to her later, she said she is due to be posted to Yorkshire shortly. She has already been in touch with trainers up there about riding work. Her aim is to compete in the big Military races at Sandown next spring.

Generous Ransom came home in front of a tactically run Mens' Open. He's in fine form at present; his connections will be desperate to squeeze another win out of him before the season closes.

The card finished with two straightforward victories for Margot Fontane in the Veterans and Novice Riders and For 'N' Against in the Conditions.

One of the other attractions was a Tug Of War contest. On a slippery slope! I only got a C- in physics at school but even to me it didn't seem very fair. The teams pulling downhill

won every round.

PEPER HAROW MAY 12TH

I was speaking to leading flat jockey Jim Crowley a little while back, he was reminiscing about his time riding Pointers "I rode at that funny place where you race around a tree. What's it called?"

"Peper Harow?"

"That's it!"

A smile spread across his face and he gently shook his head. It might only be fifteen miles but it's a world away from Royal Ascot.

This is a truly bonkers place. I am always telling racing friends "you must go there. You won't like it, but you will remember it!"

They race around the roundabout, behind the helter-skelter, between the sponsor's double-deckers, through the plantation and across the water meadow. You have to rely on the commentator's word as you can see very little of the action. For some of the way

he's not much better off than you are, and he's up a crane! About thirty years ago the numberboard blew down, poleaxing the gentleman who'd just put the names in the frame.

I haven't been here since they swapped the course around from left handed to a right handed one, done in an effort to stop the leaders slipping over on the final turn. I've had to give it a miss in recent years because the card has clashed with the 2,000 Guineas. Finally Newmarket has seen sense and rearranged their meeting.

It's a course I will always associate with Cedar Chief, a right old rascal who raced in purple and pink blinkers, boots and bandages. Back in 2007 he lined up at Sandown, the wife told everybody she knew there that her then favourite horse, a 66/1 shot (100/1 in places), would run well. She was so proud, bless her, when only a Paul Nicholls' hot pot beat him home.

A couple of months later he lined up in



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POINT TO POINT

the Member's here alongside two extraordinarily slow rivals. One was on the beginning of a run that read p4fpp-pupp, the other was a 14yo that was having his final run before retirement. Cedar Chief needed a parachute such was the drop in class. He only had to stand up to win.

There was, at the time, a lairy gentleman desperate to stand as a bookmaker. Previously in the season he'd been behind a joint bankrolling somebody else. He'd enjoyed telling all the other bookies where they had been going wrong. Peper Harow was to be his first time in front on a stall. All the other layers stood around as he chalked up his first ever price. He scribbled 4/6 alongside Cedar Chief. I dived in

“£400/600?”

He couldn't refuse with that audience. The next price was 2/5. The jolly won eased down whilst his remaining opponent was still lolloping past the coconut shy.

Today's field sizes were possibly affected by this coming Thursday's Hunters' Chase evening at Fontwell. That received 141 entries, including many of the local horses you would normally expect to see spinning around here. The crowd size was definitely affected by the lousy weather.

Recently, it's paid to keep an eye out for the Turner family's horses towards the back end of a season. Almost all their horses have seemed to favour quick ground.

The clan's horsebox must have been full of smiles on the drive back to Suffolk as they drove home laden with the trophies from both Opens. This despite the fact the word firm was about three hours worth of rain away from the going report.

He might not like getting his hooves muddy but Franks A Million loves this tight track. His victory in the Men's Open took his course record to three wins and a second from his four visits.

Just like his stablemate, Kriss William prefers it rattling rather than squelchy. Still punters chose to send him off the odds-on favourite in a weak four-runner Ladies Open. Neither their confidence or their money were misplaced.

Be lucky **RA**



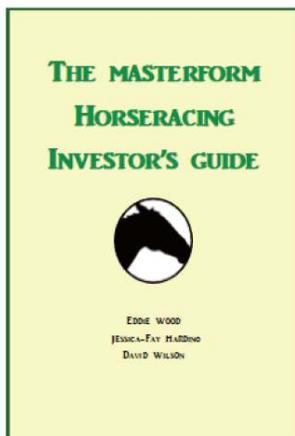
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Because of my illness, the books referred to in last month's issue will all be delayed but will certainly be available from the 15th of June, if not before. These can be purchased at a pro-forma price: *Trainer Change Profitability Method* (£14 standard price £15), *The Masterform Horseracing Investor's Guide* (£18 standard price £20) and *Winning with the Racing Post* (£26 standard price £30.)

Below is an extract taken from the Preface of *Winning With the Racing Post*:



“A very long time ago, I learnt that one could achieve very little without diligently applying oneself to the task at hand. It is paramount to be industrious and steadfast to achieve the highest levels of success. These sentiments are certainly applicable to operating in the betting industry. The racehorse investor needs to embrace this concept if they are to emerge with a credit balance every year.

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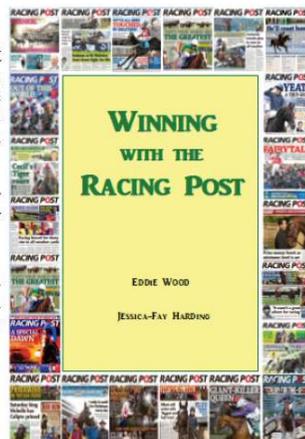
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RASCAL CAN BE IN DERBY MIX

Richie Rich picks out the horses that have impressed him over the past few weeks

YOUNGRASCAL

William Haggas' Young Rascal impressive when getting off the mark by slamming Corgi five lengths, stepped up again when putting his rivals firmly in their place in the Chester Vase. Despite not getting the clearest of runs, and still showing signs of greenness, he looked impressive in beating a good yardstick in Dee Ex Bee by a comfortable half a length.

Sure to have learnt a lot from this victory, currently best price at 12-1 he looks a player in the Epsom Derby, against the hot favourite Saxon Warrior.

WILD ILLUSION

Wild illusion's defeat of Polydream in the Prix Marcel Boussac at Chantilly, was in my view the best form showed by a two-year-old filly, and signalled that she will be suited by middle distances this year. In the 1,000 Guineas, she showed that she had trained on, finishing a staying on fourth, and in doing so ran an excellent trial for the Epsom Oaks. Best priced at 12-1 she looks a solid e/w bet.

SHARJABRIDGE

On his return to action the tall Oasis Dream colt, beat all bar the equally progressive Oasis Charm last time at Newmarket. He led over two furlongs out until lack of recent run took its toll. He looks like having a good season, will be spot on next time, and will have a say in some of the valuable handicaps. It will be interesting to see where the wily Roger Varian pitches him, and he could



be just the sort for the John Smiths Cup.

SECOND GENERATION

James Tate's filly showed distinct promise on her debut. The daughter of Elmananati, who broke the course record at Leicester and finished third in the Cornwallis, was reportedly working well at home, and showed distinct promise on her debut. She appeared to be travelling very well in rear, before having nowhere to go at the furlong pole and would have finished much closer if granted a clearer

passage. Second Generation looks banker material for a filly's auction, and is entered in the champion 2yo race at Redcar. **RA**

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MAHLERMADE FOR SUCCESS

Jeremy Grayson starts this month's selection with a rare Alan King summer jumper

WARWICK, MAY 7 (GOOD) 2m3f Novices' Hurdle (class 4)

It's usually possible to count the number of horses Alan King keeps going over jumps through the summer on the fingers of two hands, but having returned here from wind surgery and an absence that stretches back to last November presumably MAHLERMADE is one of those with work to do for the master of Barbury Castle in the coming months. There will certainly be plenty of easier opportunities to get on the scoresheet than what was a fairly warm novice for this early in the nascent season, and although the damside speaks more of effectiveness at 7f-1m2f on the Flat it appeared to be a lack of pace rather than stamina that ultimately consigned the son of Mahler to an 111 third place. That being the case, perhaps trying to grind everything down from the front at this trip or slightly shorter might be a strategy to consider next time; other than this start (raced in touch) he's only ever been played patiently up to now. Soft ground appears to suit as well as good on the admittedly limited evidence to date.

2m54yds 0-120 Novices' Handicap Chase (class 4)

Whilst WINDSPIEL may share a stallion with top-notchers such as Don Cossack, the distaff side of the breeding is steadfastly Flat-oriented (albeit with successes over middle and longer dis-

tances). David Arbuthnot's five-year-old son of Sholokhov didn't look at all the wrong tool for the trade on this chasing debut, however, taking Warwick's tricky line of five fences down perfectly proficiently, and a near-71 third behind two more seasoned chasers lays down a very handy marker. Finishing strongly after appearing to be ridden to get the trip here, two miles appears to remain his optimum trip for now, and it doesn't take much of a leap of imagination to picture him wearing down a leader up a long straight or run-in at somewhere like Worcester. Sights can also afford to be lowered in terms of race banding, although the 92 he raced off here might be in danger if too literal an interpretation is taken of his proximity to a pair of animals rated over 20lb his superior.

FAKENHAM, 8 MAY (GOOD) 2m5f44yds 0-100 Handicap Chase (class 5)

There is sharp, and then there is Fakenham sharp; and whilst CAVIAR D'ALLEN may have coped fine with the tight turns of Taunton on heavy on his last but one outing (hurdles), there's little doubt that on this even quicker track and drier surface the fences simply flew at him faster than ideal. This was a pretty reasonable second chasing start all the same, and set a more conducive test the suspicion remains that he would have run the 26lb inferior-rated

winner all the way to the line. Hailing from an immediate family full of jumps and dual purpose scorers in France, many of them over fences at just under this afternoon's sort of trip, the precedent for Christian Williams' son of Laveron to carve a niche in similar graded contests to this one is certainly there. A head second in an Irish point on good to firm around Easter 2017 augurs well for his chances in the event of a prolonged dry summer.

2m4f1yd 0-120 Mares' Handicap Hurdle (class 4)

It's still plenty early days in handicap hurdles for NORTHERN BEAU, and the fact Michael Scudamore's mare was still able to run to at least her current mark in this contest (ultimately 71 third) despite forfeiting plenty of ground to her right during proceedings speaks of a mare quite likely still on the up in this sphere. Unsuitably deep ground and then (last time) racing from 10lb "wrong" in Listed company respectively offer buyable excuses for a failure to have progressed more in hurdles up to this point, but two very comfortable fast-ground wins from as many starts in Irish point-to-points the spring before that give a solid indication of what she can yet remain capable of granted similar conditions. The Canford Cliffs mare's attacking style is tailor-made for many of the jumps tracks in operation at this time of year, and a return to Market



Windspiel

Rasen's sharp clockwise line would appeal more than most with tempering any remaining inclination to jump right in mind.

**FONTWELL, 9 MAY (GOOD, GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES)
2m5f164yds 0-100 Handicap Hurdle (class 5)**

The 7l margin of defeat arguably flattens BLACK ANTHEM slightly, considering the winner Snazz Man might've cleared further away had he been neither ridden without irons for much of the straight nor nearly pushed off course two out by Black Anthem himself (for which Harry Bannister earned a holiday). Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the lowly nature of this contest, the performance of Brian Barr's Royal Anthem gelding offers renewed confidence following three struggles on heavy ground for which he plainly has less aptitude, and the mid-100s sort of ratings to which he ran when placing repeatedly in 2m4f-2m7f novice hurdles around Worcester and Newton Abbot last June and July suggest that he's about to enter his favourite time of year a competitively handicapped animal.

Although none of Barr's fourteen jumps winners since the start of the 2014-15 season has been sent off at double-digit odds, all bar one have been odds against and eight in the 7-2 to 9-1 range of prices, offering hope Black Anthem's odds of reward in victory won't be too ungenerous.

2m3f49yds 0-115 CJ Handicap Hurdle (class 4)

Not for the last time in this month's column, a beating by a rival transformed by the move to Dr Richard Newland still easily rates a meritworthy enough performance to earn the vanquished a nomination as a future winner. Although only once meaningfully involved in the finish of a race from nine defeats before this, PRESENT DESTINY knew enough to keep determinedly up to his task once headed half a furlong from home and in the process reaffirmed the impression given in the past that genuinely good ground or faster suits best. Perhaps most encouraging, however, was the Seamus Mullins' six-year-old's receptiveness to the switch to front-running tactics, and the son of Dubai Destination

is certainly worth giving at least one chance to make all dropped slightly in distance on the evidence of this showing, assuming top of the ground is again available.

**LUDLOW, 13 MAY (GOOD)
1m7f169yds 0-135 Handicap Hurdle (class 3)**

A gelding with no win in any race since October 2014 and two different owners in the meantime surely isn't being kept by a yard as powerful (and with as constant a turnover of many of its inmates) as Dan Skelton's without good reason. The suspicion remains that BERTIMONT still has another reasonable pot in him, all the more so off a current career-low mark which is nearly a stone below that of that most recent success (in the former Free Hurdle at Chepstow, no less), and there was no shame in a well-held third here behind a former Triumph Hurdle fifth turned inside out by the move to Richard Newland and a triple previous C&D scorer. However, whilst the Slickly eight-year old clearly acts on good ground despite no career successes on it, perhaps the outpaced nature of his defeat here serves indica-

OUT IN THE STICKS

tion that an exploratory run or two up at around 2m2f, for what would be the first time since his early days in France, is worth considering granted such underfoot conditions.

1m7f169yds Newcomers NH Flat Race (class 4)

Nicky Henderson has targeted this corresponding contest for unraced bumper horses in recent years, the not unwise assumption to draw from which being that anything representing him in it is implicitly streetwise enough to do itself justice first time out. That proved not to be the case here, however, as the strongly supported ALPH (debuting fewer than eight years after his popular namesake last ran for Andy Chard and Roger Teal) proceeded to get all of the basics wrong, pulling hard early under the funeral pace and hanging for pres-

sure late on. There was more than a glimmer of ability shown in the son of Gold Well's 2.5l second here for all that, though whether he's best off having efforts concentrated upon any further bumper outings is moot. Out of a daughter of Cambridgeshire/Swinton Hurdle/Fairyhouse Grade 2 hurdle scorer She's Our Mare, and with 2m-3m4f jumps winners among the dam's siblings, the four-year-old appeals more as one to take on the older horses with in receipt of weight in a routine summer novice hurdle next.

KEMPTON, 14 MAY (GOOD, GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES)

2m Novices' Hurdle (class 4)

Owner Carl Hinchy is no stranger to spreading his risk or moving horses around between yards to keep them interested, and the St Helens-based

solicitor's transfer of CAUSE TOUJOURS from Dan Skelton to Ian Williams reaped instant rewards with victory in this novice contest, albeit either or both of a wind operation and a relative paucity of competition might have played a part also. Either way, this relatively lightly raced son of Khalkevi is just one race into his campaign for the calendar year, let alone the new season, and he can expect to be given plenty of chances to follow up. Although the novice option remains open until next April, the temptation to campaign him towards a target of the Summer Hurdle - a race Williams is still to win - must be great, considering a current rating of 121 which would see him make the cut in most renewals. This win, plus a soft-ground Warwick bumper success in late 2016, suggest he won't mind how wet or dry the summer gets. **RA**

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HENRY IS SO MUCH MISSED

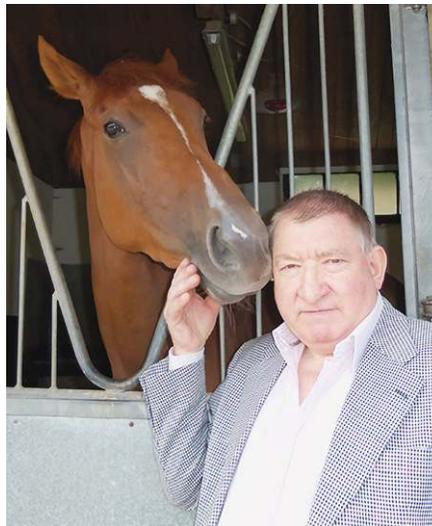
Dave Youngman joins the rest of Newmarket in remembrance on the fifth anniversary of the great trainer's death

Many of us here at Newmarket will have our thoughts turning to the late Henry Cecil this month. It hardly seems possible that it is five years this month that he died. He was so good to me and very often went out of his way to help me whenever I was at Warren Place, he really made me feel welcome and I cherish the time I was lucky enough to spend there. Everyone was so happy when he came back to the top tier of racing with the great Frankel. He was so popular, everybody loved Henry.

Hot Snap that I am pictured with here was very dear to Henry Cecil. She won the Nell Gwyn for him, she is doing very well as a broodmare at Khalid Abdullah's Banstead Manor Stud. She has a lovely two-year-old bay colt by Frankel named HOME FIRE in training. This horse is doing very well and showing us a lot of ability already in its work out on the gallops.

William Haggas was delighted to see YOUNG RASCAL win at Chester and plans to let it take its chance in the Epsom Derby for owner Bernard Kantor. The son of Intello is still a shade green and immature but hopefully will run a fair race. FRANKELLINA is a lovely bay filly by Frankel out of Our Obsession owned by Anthony Oppenheimer that is impressing us all with her work on the gallops. She looks a fine prospect going forward for the Somerville Lodge stable.

Sir Michael Stoute has his horses in fine form and jockey Pat Dobbs made a rare appearance to ride work for the



master of Freemason Lodge. CRYSTAL OCEAN worked under Ryan Moore on the Limekilns round gallop and showed us all how much he has come on for his recent success in the Gordon Richards Stakes. He hopefully will be heading to Ireland next for the 1m 2f Tattersalls Gold Cup.

Sun Maiden, a daughter of Frankel, went very well recently on the Limekilns in a spin under Ted Durcan for Sir Michael. Hopes are high she can make up into a nice type this season.

David Lanigan is hoping to win a race or two this term with LIGHT OF JOY. This horse was one of the first to work on the watered gallop when it was opened for the season. Pat Cosgrave has been riding work and has been seen to good effect on this four-year-old. This horse is from the family of Ulysses.

NARODOWA has had three races and has now got a handicap mark of

just 69. This daughter of Iffraaj is very well treated and Lanigan can be relied upon to place her to advantage.

Dombra is a lovely unraced juvenile trained by Hugo Palmer. This son of Frankel is named after a musical instrument popular in Turkey. This colt has been working very nicely on the Limekilns trial ground. Home-bred by his owner Ibrahim Araci, he is out of Chigun, the last winner trained by Henry Cecil before his death in 2013, when she won a Group 3 race at The Curragh.

Peter Chapple-Hyam made a rare visit to the Limekilns recently to work juvenile MOHOGANY on the long gallop partnered by Jack Mitchell. The son of Foxwedge showed up nicely in this piece of work. The master of St Gatien is short on numbers nowadays but still knows how to train when he gets a good one.

Jockey Jamie Spencer rides work for various trainers and is a familiar sight in his Audi on work mornings here at HQ. He is in great demand at Luca Cumani, David Simcock and Michael Bell's yards. He recently put MRS SIPPY through her paces for David and Jenny Simcock on the Cambridge Road Polytrack and this daughter of Blame could be a nice type for summer.

We have now finished racing on the Rowley Mile until the autumn and our first meeting on the July Course is on June 22-23. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible during the coming months. It is always a pleasure chatting to you all whenever we meet, I fully realise how passionate you all are about this great sport. **RA**

PACEMAKERS SHOULD CARRY A WARNING!

Paul Jacobs thinks trainers need to come clean over the front-running roles of some horses

It has been a very interesting few months with the debate surrounding the FOBTs, and as a consequence of the Government's action to reduce stakes to a mere £2 the industry will undoubtedly suffer.

However, it means that bookmakers will have to go back to their core skill, and it is supposedly their original real skill, that of bookmaking, making up a competitive book and laying a real bet.

When there was only Ladbrokes, Hills, Coral and Mecca on the high street you could a) get a bet on and b) see the differential in prices between the fab four.

The logic that should prevail with 30 odd bookmakers available is a competitive market and each layer striving to take your horse racing bet. Sadly that is far from the case.

But for me outside of this machine debate one point of order still hasn't been addressed... PACEMAKERS.

The rules of racing stress that every horse must run on its own merits with a view to winning a race.

Cue this year's 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket.

Aidan O'Brien had three runners in the first Classic of the season, namely

Murillo, Gustav Klimt and, of course, the winner Saxon Warrior.

To the average punter who walked into a betting shop on Saturday May 5 and wanted a bet in the race but thought that Saxon Warrior was a bit too short, their eyes would have been drawn to the other Ballydoyle runners.

Mmmmm Murillo at 40/1, that's massive for an O'Brien runner, looks a bit of value, I think I will have a tenner each-way.

Sadly that punter and many others will have had no idea that here was a pacemaker merely put into the race to set it up for his two other runners, to ensure it was a good test of stamina, particularly for Saxon Warrior with a mile considered as a bare minimum for him.

Yet at no time in his numerous quotes before the race was it suggested that Murillo was to act purely as a pacemaker.

The evidence strongly suggests he had little chance of lasting out a mile and that was ultimately the case as he faded badly from a furlong and a half out to finish a weary ninth.

At the Golden Mile meetings in athletics we knew before hand that Steve Lacy was a pacemaker and no more than that for Seb Coe's numerous world record attempts. Nobody would ever bet on Mr Lacy.

In the 1975 King George - the great



Grundy-Bustino duel - it was common knowledge, never denied and openly paraded, that Highest and Kinglet would make this a deep test of stamina. Indeed if Major Hern had his way he would have run a third pacemaker in Riboson, to take on the anchor leg of those duties, but he was injured leading up to the Ascot contest.

Last year's St Leger was another example, a glaring example of pace-making duties on track, but still nothing was said in the Press and no action taken thereafter.

You and I being fanatical racing fans can identify these horses, but for the less regular punter, they simply don't know. It is a part of racing that needs to be made more transparent.

O'Brien needs to say more than Murillo is fit and well and instead state that he is in there to ensure an end to end gallop. Now that's not so hard to do is it? But then he wouldn't be running his race to win would he? Mmmmmm.

Now that's off my chest, all eyes turn to Epsom and I have to say the aforementioned Saxon Warrior looks every inch a Derby horse, but again the value has been done and dusted with him.

I was very taken by the Chester Vase victory of Young Rascal and if we get good to soft ground come the first Saturday of June then he looks a very solid each-way alternative.

Rostropovich was also very impressive at Chester, but I suspect the French Derby could be his aim. Wherever he turns up next though I will be backing him to the hilt.

The Oaks favourite Lah Ti Dar would be a solid wager on the Friday, but again only if the ground were genuinely good or softer otherwise she looks vulnerable and O'Brien's Forever Together at 16/1 looks a solid each-way play after she was given a less than moderate ride in the Cheshire Oaks.

Longer term the two horses I have backed ante-post for the Royal Ascot meeting are Gilgamesh (Hunt Cup) following his desperately unlucky run in the Victoria Cup when drawn on the wrong side of the track and Penhill at around 20/1 for the Ascot Gold Cup. **RA**



Rostropovich

“
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'BAD' TRAINERS WORK AS HARD AS GOOD ONES

Keith Knight says that Matt Chapman is not always right

Recently Matt Chapman, on the always excellent *Morning Show*, came out with the sort of statement of ignorance that defines the 'racing expert' with no practical experience of horses and training of racehorses.

Let me be clear: I like Matt Chapman. I did not think I would as I expected him to be a mini-McCririck, and though at times he veers in that direction, his professionalism allows him to rein back his ebullient personality. I get the impression that he truly appreciates the part he is allowed to play in bringing horse racing into the homes of the British public and I hope that will temper his undoubted ambition to become ever more famous. And, of course, on live television presenters do not always have the time to engage their brains before deploying their tongues.

Matt said in response to a suggestion that perhaps to give the smaller trainer opportunities denied to them by the strength of numbers of the 'big battalions' races could be framed to exclude any trainer to have trained (for example) more than ten winners (an idea I endorse): 'Why should trainers who are no good at their job be given a leg up in life'. I paraphrase. But that was his ringing criticism of the majority of trainers.

In any profession there will be a hierarchy, with the blessed few at the top



Matt Chapman

earning big bucks, those who get by earning a fair living in the higher and middle reaches and there will be those at the bottom who struggle each month to pay the bills. This is life in the raw whether life is lived under the rule of communism or democracy. But this does not mean that those at the

bottom of the food chain are any less dedicated or talented than those who regularly win the opportunity to sip champagne with ITV presenters.

There is no manual for training racehorses. The courses a potential trainer must sit only test competency and fitness to deserve a licence to train. He or

she must have access to the sort of facilities that will enable them to send fit horses to the races but it is not decreed that every trainer should have x-number of gallops, a loose school, swimming pool or solarium. Or indeed multi-millionaire owners supplying him or her with expensive horses. Or a full complement of highly-skilled staff.

It cannot be denied that the cream will usually rise to the top but luck plays a large part, especially when it comes to racehorses, in determining top from middle order. Did Sir Mark Prescott not laughingly say that 90% of his horses do their best to injure themselves and are aided and abetted by 95% of his staff. Again, I paraphrase. To become a trainer who makes the job pay great amounts of good luck is required. And facilities play a big part, too. If a trainer has only one gallop at his disposal life becomes difficult when that gallop is off limits due to the weather.

In my experience all yards have that one horse who will 'take them to the top'. But if that one horse is hit with the virus or colic or develops leg problems or needs fast ground during a very wet season... or if the big businessman who helps sets him up and promises six figure sums of money to buy well-bred yearlings then gets into financial difficulties... or if the bank stops being helpful... or if the good head lad who was talked into joining you decides the grass is greener elsewhere

It is wrong and crass of Matt Chapman to label low-yielding trainers as 'bad trainers'. Trainers with a small string low on quality can work every bit as hard as a successful trainer with over a hundred horses. They doubtless work harder as they possibly cannot afford a head lad and must rise before dawn to feed their charges and must drive the horsebox as they cannot afford the luxury of a driver. They probably have to ride three or four lots every morning and even muck out and sweep the yard.

I wonder when Mullins, Elliot, Henderson, Nicholls, Gosden, O'Brien and co did any of those labours?

I have argued this point before and doubtless will do so again: this sport raises millions of pounds in differing ways for various charities yet it does surprisingly little for those struggling within the sport.

I have tried in vain to debate the idea of races restricted to jockeys who have ridden only a limited number of winners in a season, and I dare say Matt Chapman would be opposed to that idea on the same grounds as he is opposed to races restricted to trainers who have only trained a limited number of winners in a season.

Yet the small-scale trainer tends to have as owners small-scale owner/breeders that need to be

encouraged and supported.

Racehorse trainers work damn hard for little reward. They are not by default 'bad trainers' just because their rate of success is lower than trainers with the best horses, the best jockeys, the wealthiest owners, the best staff and best facilities at their disposal.

A long while ago I was associated with a 5-year-old who won the most competitive Men's Open point-to-point seen in East Anglia in many a long year. He also broke the track record. Multiple winning Open horses could not live with him. Arriving home, the world seemed our oyster. On the answerphone there were offers in the high five-figures, which could be raised to six-figures, of course. The next morning the horse had heat in his suspensory and never won another race. **RA**

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GALILEO MADE ME BLINK WITH DISBELIEF

Graham Buddry remembers his first awe-inspiring encounter with the Derby hero and future wonder sire

Due to other commitments I had hardly seen any of the early races of the 2001 Flat season and knew of only a few of the contestants that would be lining up at Epsom for the Derby.

Catching up as best I could, I paid attention to a recording of a horse I knew little about at the time but a few minutes later I was certain I had found not just the winner of the Derby but perhaps a horse for the ages.

I didn't know what race the piece of footage I saw was of, but what caught my attention was the angle at which the film had been shot. Rather than the normal view we see, this was far lower as if it had been taken from below the height of the running rails and in that few moments I was mesmerised.

Here was a horse that was just cantering along while the others around it were working hard.

As I looked closely I saw the reason why: the bay colt had such a long, raking stride he was covering half as much ground again as those around him and when he was asked to race, well, he simply took off.

That lengthy stride, unleashed, annihilated the opposition. I sat looking at the screen as if smitten by a revelation. I knew I had seen something special and also knew, for certain, that I had just seen the next Derby winner. Within min-

utes I was pawing through the form books to see just what this horse I now knew as Galileo had achieved, half expecting to see proof that he had thrashed Champion the Wonder Horse and trounced Pegasus. It wasn't far off it.

The Sadlers Wells colt out of Arc de Triomphe winner, Urban Sea, had won his only three races, all at Leopardstown, for his trainer, Aiden O'Brien.

A sole start as a two-year-old on October 28, 2000 under Mick Kinane was a 16 runner maiden race over a full mile in heavy ground and Galileo could hardly have been more impressive. Drifting ominously in the betting from an opening price of 2/5 he was sent off at evens, hit the front inside the two furlong marker and just pulled further and further clear, pulling out a staggering 14 lengths without even trying.

As a three-year-old he opened his account in a 1¼ mile Listed race on 16 April, again winning in eye-opening style and followed up four weeks later in a Group 3 Derby Trial. At the time these races seemed normal but in the first of these two races, the Ballysax Stakes, the second placed horse, Milan, later won the St Leger and finished a¾ length second in the Breeders Cup Turf while the third horse that day, Vinnie Roe, would later win the Irish St Leger four times and place second in a Melbourne Cup.

And so to Epsom. Arguably, more

than any other race in Europe the Derby has the strongest influence on future generations of thoroughbreds. Despite the eccentricities of the course it is the single most important race where the future of racehorses are concerned and worth far more than the winning prize money. Win here and it's probable that an indelible mark will be made on the history of the sport as a Derby winner not only commands huge stud fees but is sought after for the best mares around with the chance of siring a new dynasty.

For the 2001 Derby there were seven horses capable of winning.

Sharing favouritism with Galileo was the Sir Michael Stoute trained Golan, unbeaten winner most recently of the Two Thousand Guineas. Fast enough to win the first Classic of the season, Golan was bred for the Derby trip and would have his finest hour when winning the 2002 King George at Ascot.

The Godolphin owned Toubougg had been the champion two-year-old of the previous season and had also been unbeaten going into the Guineas where his ninth place confirmed he needed further and a big run was expected of him.

Perfect Sunday was by a Derby winner in Quest for Fame out of a Nureyev mare and had recently run away with the Lingfield Derby Trial. In the famous Abdullah colours he cer-



Galileo, ridden by Mick Kinane, wins the 2001 Vodafone Derby at Epsom

tainly had his supporters, as did Stoute's other runner, Dilshaan, winner of the Racing Post Trophy as a two-year-old and the Dante Stakes prior to Epsom this season, he also had enough potential to win the Derby.

Among the other runners in the field of 12 were a couple of other fancied runners in Mr Combustible, fresh from his recent success in the Chester Vase and Storming Home, a future winner of both the King Edward VII Stakes at Royal Ascot and the Champion Stakes.

All of these were good horses in their own right, but none had the majesty I had seen in Galileo with that easy, yet powerful, raking stride which devoured the ground in one enormous bound where other horses took two.

Derby day dawned dry and sunny with the ground riding good to firm, so it was clear it would be a fast race with the best horses to the fore and that is exactly what happened. Breaking well it was Mr Combustible and Perfect Sunday who set a scorching pace with

Mick Kinane keeping Galileo on the outside of Dilshaan in a group of three tracking the leading pair and always going ominously well. Golan was immediately behind Galileo, watching his every move with Tobougg line astern and watching them both and Storming Home racing on his inside. Sweeping down Tattenham Hill and around Tattenham Corner several runners came under pressure, Golan being shaken up as well.

At the three furlong marker Galileo put his head down, stretched his neck out and loosed that awesome, ground devouring stride and in moments he had caught the leaders, drawn level and gone past. Back in the pack Golan was chasing after Galileo as fast as he could and Tobougg, in turn, was chasing hard after Golan, but up front Galileo was pulling further and further clear, never in danger and never really asked for an all out effort as he strode to immortality with a three and a half length victory over his 11/4 co-favourite Golan.

Second to seventh place played out exactly to form with Golan closely followed by Tobougg then a gap to Mr Combustible, Storming Home, Perfect Sunday and Dilshaan.

The no-hopers had run to the best of their limited ability and luckily kept out of the way to ensure a true result which was topped, of course, by Galileo winning with highly impressive ease. Timeform rated Galileo the best winner of the race for ten years and Kinane claimed Galileo to be the best horse he had ever ridden and said; "There is no weakness in him."

In the very fast time of two minutes 33.27 seconds Galileo had achieved what I had seen as his destiny. The long striding colt had won the most important race of his career and in the process changed the course of the thoroughbred forever. He would be lauded, sent the best breeding stock and would build a new empire where his name alone in the bloodline would be the new pinnacle.

YESTERDAY'S HEROES

After Northern Dancer the baton of the world's best stallion had passed to his son, Sadlers Wells, and then, with others of the bloodline vying for this prestige and honour, along had come his own best son in Galileo.

After Epsom Galileo extended his unbeaten record by landing the Irish Derby at The Curragh, beating Italian Derby winner, Morshdi into second with both Golan and Mr Combustible beaten far easier than at Epsom, showing that he was still improving.

From there he took on older horses for the first time when he added the King George and Queen Elizabeth Stakes at Ascot to his growing CV.

Morshdi was put firmly to the sword here, finishing one place further back than the equally thrashed recent French

Derby winner, Anabaa Blue. The only horse able to mount a serious challenge to Galileo had been the Godolphin five-year-old, fantastic Light, already a Group 1 winner in four different countries and who would win the Breeders Cup Turf only four months later.

It made little difference. In a titanic clash both colts gave their all but Galileo always had the edge and eventually forged clear to win by two lengths.

Fantastic Light did manage to reverse the placing in the Irish Champion Stakes but that had more to do with the Godolphin pacemaker easing off the rail on the home turn to let Fantastic Light through while simultaneously forcing Galileo ever wider round the outside. At the line Galileo had closed the distance

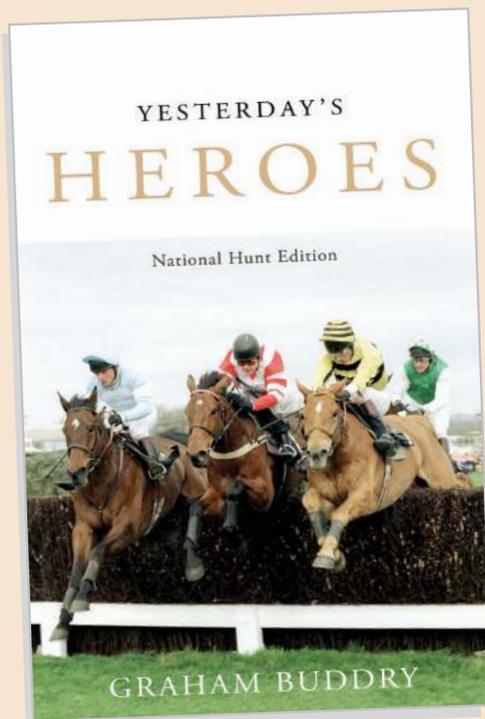
down to a short head but couldn't quite make up the lost ground.

Retired to stud at the end of the season Galileo is now a multiple champion sire with around 200 stakes winners to his name, despite undergoing surgery for colic in September 2008.

At present he has sired more than 70 individual Group 1 winners worldwide including the Breeders Cup and the winners of all five English Classics. In 2016 he also sired the first three home in the Arc de Triomphe, to say nothing of a certain son of his called Frankel.

Despite this legacy to all who love the racehorse it was on the track that a long striding colt captured my imagination and then fulfilled his destiny when storming away to win the Derby with the ease of a great champion. **RA**

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SUCCESS AS 'THE KNOCKER' GETS KNOCKED

Simon Nott spends time on the rails at Exeter

EXETER 8TH MAY

Exeter is a course that is always a pleasure to visit, even on one of its legendary trial-by-weather moments, which tonight thankfully wasn't.

It holds loads of memories for this writer being my local track. I probably first visited Exeter in the mid-1980s where it looked very different. The betting ring was laid out in a horseshoe shape, skirted by a couple of foot high rails supported by some strange concrete-filled rocket-looking things dotted around it.

Back in those days the ring was pretty much always full. On the left as you looked at it from the stands stood Harry Metcalfe trading as Jack Bevan, a firm from Torquay established in 1897. Harry stood tall, always in an immaculate suit calling bets looking every inch the gentleman distinguished with his topping of silver hair.

Harry had a trick: when the punters were standing back on a race he'd call in a couple of old friends, Colonel Gazimes and Harry Foster. At even given point he'd loudly call in a lumpy bet to either of those imaginary gentlemen and rub the price from the board. More often than not the punters that had been hanging around waiting for the 11/8 to go 6/4 would then pile in protesting that they were 'just about to back it'.

It was also worth hanging around

Harry just in case an outsider looked like winning with one to jump, you'd get some terrific value, just call the bet when he shouted 'I'll take 2/1' with a rag 20 lengths clear and wait to collect. Unless it fell or got collared of course, happy days.

When the BPA member laid out the pitches he used a list with seniority written on it, a glance would tell you that Jack Bevan was listed as having started betting at Exeter or rather Devon & Exeter as it still was then in 1946, as did Dave Pipe and Bernard Redfern.

Dave Pipe stood next to Harry and a lot of friendly banter ensued between the two. Dave never looked quite the gent as Harry did, dressed more for practicality than posture. What he lacked in classy clobber he made up for with guile. Nobody could read Dave Pipe, not even his floorman, in fact especially his floorman with whom a bickering exchange throughout the afternoon was usually the norm.

Opposite Dave and Harry stood Bernard Redfern who was (I believe) the oldest of what had been a powerful Torquay dynasty. Bernard and his wife Joan were elderly when I got involved in the ring. They had a clerk named Dave with the prefix Bristol who drove a taxi that had 200,000 miles on the clock, had an omnipresent fag, the ash of which he wipe from the book with a

squint and was an absolutely cracking bloke.

The entire ring was full of characters and it was the whole ring, including the aforementioned three, that came a cropper when an almighty gamble was landed in a seller on a horse named Bootscraper. One punter per bookmaker went in with military precision and backed the horse from 9/2 into 6/4, last noted bet in the ring £600-£400 down with Bernard Redfern, biggest £9,000-£2,000 with Stephen Little (now there's another story) though he did cut them from the requested £18,000 - £4,000, well it was an Exeter seller after all. The horse duly bolted up, the plotters landed a touch but the footnote to the story is that it could have been so much worse for the bookies.

Connections were stunned to see that Man On The Spot had napped the horse in *The Sporting Life*, quite how nobody knows given the previous form figures. The next time you see him, ask him, none other than a very young but obviously shrewd Eddie 'The Shoe' Fremantle.

Back to 2018 and sadly none of the 'big three' are still with us and the old horseshoe shape of the betting ring is now long gone. Some of the old names remain though, including Jack Bevan who were active in the ring backing a rag in the opening Horse And Groom



Simon James Bookmaker

others have dropped by the wayside. Despite getting an odds-on shot beaten it wasn't great for the layers that don't lay the short ones on the machine. It was Ladies' Evening, not exactly chock full of odds-on punters so the second favourite each way had been very popular.

The books got Rockpoint the odds-on jolly beaten in the Wonford Inn Exeter 'National Hunt' Novices' Hurdle too. Those that didn't lay it on the machine in the opener wouldn't have laid this one either. The winner, Harry Fry's Sero-sevsky had at first glance been backed from 9/2 into 3/1 and was by far the worst in most books, this time it wasn't just the ladies that had been backing the second-in but largely down to the plethora of non-runners that were coming through the public address system at the rate of London buses resulting in two 10p Rule Fours throwing betting into temporary turmoil not once but twice.

There also appeared to be a stick on of sorts on David Pipe's Just Midas, backed into 20/1. It was never going but one layer dismissed the 'move' as 'all the women backing it because its silks were pretty pink', though I'm not sure the accuracy of that.

An old bookie mate of mine who used to have a betting shop near the yard used to swear that when an elderly lady he said was connected to the Chris Down yard had a fiver on you could top it up with your mortgage. He's long-since turned the game in and become an estate agent, I don't know if she's still about or betting but if she is she probably had her fiver on Max Forte in the Ship Inn Teignmouth Handicap Hurdle.

The gelding was backed from 6/1 into 4/1 and did the business under Bryony Frost. There had been a tip flying about for David Pipe's Friday Night Out which had been well-backed into 4/1, travelled

Heavitree Mares' Maiden Hurdle. Given there was a 1/3 shot in the race, Donald McCain's Secret Escape, their bet was each-way. It wasn't placed though, the favourite was, but not first, it had to settle for second behind Tillythetank the 7/2 second-in. 'Alan the Beard said

that McCain has a terrible record here,' Armaloft Alex enlightened us, after the race, though of course that evidence would have been there for all to see had anyone looked, that's why Alan the Beard with the big bins has been coming for as long as I remember while

TALES FROM THE BETTING RING



well for a long way then went out like a, well, light.

A racecourse regular was spotted having a fair bet on Susan Gardner's Eddy at a double-figure price. Armaloft Alex was keen to temper any thoughts of following him in dismissing the punter as 'The worst judge since Pontius Pilate'. It made me chuckle and was a fair call too, the gelding only beat one home.

At this point racegoers were invited to go to the lawn in front of the Racecourse Office if they fancied their chances at the best-dressed man and woman competition.

There were plenty of ladies who had turned up in their finery and thought why not, why not indeed. Even one - obligatory these days it seems - chap turned up in a frock and entered too, well it is 2018. He'd probably have been better off having a crack at best-dressed man because only a handful overcame their bashfulness to stand up and be judged.

Back in the ring betting was underway on the fourth race, the Heavtree Brew-

ery Handicap Chase and developing into a fair heat.

When you work or even spend your recreation in the betting industry there is no bigger cardinal sin than 'knocking'. It's a lot less prevalent now with debit card betting etc but credit betting used to be quite common in the betting ring. Trusted punters (and of course bookmaker's staff) could call bets in over the heads of waiting cash punters and had their bets put into the book 'with a ring' which was what the clerk did to the bet, 'ring' the name so it was known the bet hadn't been paid on.

Bigger punters used their short-term credit for ease of getting on and would usually settle up either after the race, meeting or sometimes at a later date. From time to time a person owing would go on the missing list. They more often than not return at some point and square up the bookie; after all not paying was the cardinal sin.

On occasion there would be a character that would just not pay, make no effort to pay and brazen it out. One such character was at Exeter tonight,

he'd owed at least one bookmaker betting there for over a decade. It still annoys me to see him swaggering around the ring knowing he's knocker. Anyway, it appeared that there was a touch going on Jimmy Frost's Triple Chief backed from 8/1 into 9/2 and ridden by super in form daughter Bryony.

The knocker had told one of the few people that still want to be in his company that he was on at the top price though quite who'd have laid him would be anyone's guess.

It was even more gutting to see that the gamble was going to be landed. Bryony had made all, jumped the last in front and looked all over the winner, the knocker was going to cop.

Then all of a sudden Colin Tizzard's Kings Lad, also backed, this time from 12/1 into 17/2 but not by the knocker sprouted wings and collared the Frost's gelding on the run-in. I've never 'Ayed Ayed' a horse I've not backed myself so loudly.

Nobody likes a knocker, let's just hope he paid on whoever he backed it with. **RA**

ONES TO FOLLOW

TOP JOCKEYS IN JUNE SINCE 2003

Jockey	Rides	Wins	Win%	£1bet	Places	Place%	Jockey	Bets	Wins	Win%	£1bet	Places	Place%
Velazquez, J R	16	3	19%	30	3	19%	Pasquier, S	14	1	7%	-11.12	3	21%
Guyon, Maxime	11	2	18%	-5.12	3	27%	Doyle, James	121	8	7%	-28.02	29	24%
Murtagh, J	163	27	17%	67.66	52	32%	Fallon, K	172	12	7%	-106.13	54	31%
Benoist, Gregory	12	2	17%	-1.5	4	33%	Munro, Alan	46	3	7%	-13.25	7	15%
Moore, Ryan	340	48	14%	-77.52	128	38%	Fortune, Jimmy	168	12	7%	-45.17	39	23%
Darley, K	54	7	13%	-16.87	13	24%	Supple, W J	28	2	7%	-9	6	21%
Mackay, Nicky	16	2	13%	3	4	25%	Havlin, Robert	18	1	6%	3	4	22%
Manning, K J	38	5	13%	-19.52	11	29%	Queally, T P	122	7	6%	-68.6	24	20%
Drowne, Steve	62	7	11%	128.5	13	21%	OShea, T P	18	1	6%	-5	3	17%
Lordan, W M	38	4	11%	-12.17	8	21%	Ffrench, Royston	18	1	6%	-11.5	4	22%
Dalgleish, K	10	1	10%	1	4	40%	Ajtebi, Ahmed	18	1	6%	8	2	11%
Allan, David	10	1	10%	16	2	20%	Egan, John	66	4	6%	54	10	15%
Buick, William	196	20	10%	-5.65	41	21%	Makin, Phillip	31	2	6%	-9	8	26%
Rosario, J	10	1	10%	-5	2	20%	Smullen, P J	115	7	6%	-53.25	16	14%
Mongan, Ian	23	2	9%	17.5	6	26%	Twiston-Davies, Mr W	16	1	6%	-8.5	4	25%
Robinson, Philip	57	5	9%	-25.5	14	25%	Kingscote, Richard	64	4	6%	-17	8	13%
Quinn, T	47	4	9%	31	8	17%	ODonoghue, C	19	1	5%	15	5	26%
Spencer, Jamie	254	22	9%	5.51	76	30%	Mulrennan, Paul	20	1	5%	-12	4	20%
OBrien, J P	67	6	9%	-36.04	20	30%	Kinane, M J	96	5	5%	-71.63	21	22%
Heffernan, J A	43	4	9%	21.5	9	21%	Harley, M	55	3	5%	-2	7	13%
Ahern, Eddie	81	7	9%	-18.25	11	14%	Sanders, Seb	74	4	5%	-14	17	23%
Hughes, Richard	253	23	9%	-67.11	62	25%	Moshea, G	20	1	5%	-11	8	40%
Dettori, L	304	28	9%	-89.67	86	28%	Hills, Michael	92	5	5%	-29.5	15	16%
Berry, F M	38	3	8%	-6	9	24%	Norton, Francis	27	1	4%	7	5	19%
Kirby, Adam	89	7	8%	-10	20	22%	Hitchcott, Sam	25	1	4%	-4	3	12%
Fanning, Joe	101	8	8%	-19.5	21	21%	Gibbons, Graham	26	1	4%	-17	1	4%
McDonogh, D P	12	1	8%	9	1	8%	Donohoe, Stephen	23	1	4%	-11	2	9%
Hills, R	110	9	8%	-37.92	20	18%	Sweeney, Fergus	28	1	4%	-13	4	14%
Peslier, O	75	6	8%	-14.62	16	21%	Dwyer, Martin	113	5	4%	-47.5	16	14%

TOP TRAINERS IN JUNE SINCE 2003

Trainer	Runs	Wins	Win%	£1bet	Places	Place%	Trainer	Bets	Wins	Win%	£1bet	Places	Place%
Lynam, Edward	13	4	31%	9.75	6	46%	Johnston, M	284	25	9%	-83.27	54	19%
Fabre, A	18	4	22%	-5.37	10	56%	Pipe, M C	12	1	8%	1	4	33%
Head, F	10	2	20%	-5.24	5	50%	Bell, M L W	79	6	8%	2.5	19	24%
Mullins, W P	25	5	20%	2.5	9	36%	Wragg, G	12	1	8%	9	3	25%
Ward, Wesley	47	9	19%	51	13	28%	Pipe, D E	12	1	8%	-2.5	3	25%
Rouget, J-C	16	3	19%	-1.5	6	38%	Stack, T	13	1	8%	-1	5	38%
OBrien, A P	286	49	17%	19.12	113	40%	Suroor, Saeed Bin	199	16	8%	-75.3	50	25%
Fanshawe, J R	52	9	17%	39.88	25	48%	Dunlop, E A L	81	6	7%	1	19	23%
Wachman, David	24	4	17%	-2.67	7	29%	Smart, B	29	2	7%	-17.5	5	17%
Cowell, R M H	24	4	17%	25	4	17%	Nosedda, J	92	6	7%	-61.25	29	32%
Jarvis, M A	51	7	14%	-4.87	17	33%	Brown, D H	14	1	7%	-10.75	3	21%
Bolger, J S	37	5	14%	-18.52	11	30%	Hannon, R	228	15	7%	-92.91	51	22%
Stoute, Sir Michael	216	28	13%	-54.32	83	38%	Chapple-Hyam, P W	50	3	6%	-34.75	10	20%
Charlton, R	50	6	12%	11.63	12	24%	Best, J R	34	2	6%	101	6	18%
Weld, D K	42	5	12%	3.5	8	19%	Brittain, C E	71	4	6%	-28.5	10	14%
Easterby, T D	27	3	11%	18	7	26%	Moore, G L	17	1	6%	-6	2	12%
Quinn, J J	19	2	11%	-4	2	11%	Oxx, John M	16	1	6%	-10.5	4	25%
Cox, C G	57	6	11%	5	15	26%	Swinburn, W R	16	1	6%	-3	3	19%
Gosden, J H M	228	25	11%	-40.94	74	32%	Appleby, Charlie	69	4	6%	-14.5	15	22%
Osborne, J A	44	5	11%	16.5	12	27%	Littmoden, N P	16	1	6%	-3	2	13%
Portman, J G	10	1	10%	2	1	10%	Tregoning, M P	34	2	6%	-24.5	11	32%
Chamings, P R	10	1	10%	24	2	20%	Dascombe, Tom	50	3	6%	-15	7	14%
Pitt, T J	10	1	10%	24	2	20%	OMeara, D	55	3	5%	31	5	9%
Tate, T P	10	1	10%	7	2	20%	Ryan, K A	102	5	5%	-13	14	14%
Morrison, H	68	7	10%	25	17	25%	Hannon (Jnr), Richard	106	5	5%	-79.2	19	18%
Webber, P R	11	1	9%	10	3	27%	Hills, Charles	57	3	5%	-22	7	12%
Bradley, J M	11	1	9%	-2	2	18%	King, A	20	1	5%	-12.5	5	25%
Henderson, N J	32	3	9%	-5.5	7	22%	Lyons, G M	20	1	5%	1	4	20%
Cecil, H R A	54	5	9%	-30.1	21	39%	Halford, M	20	1	5%	-9	2	10%



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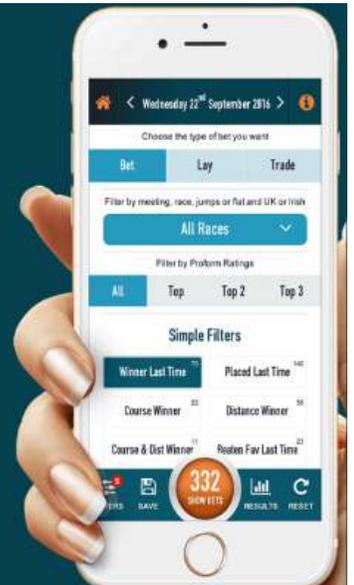
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