

Racin'



Issue 380

April-May 2023

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 2023

This final renewal reminder is only for members who receive 'paper' copies of the club magazine.

If your renewal payment has not yet been received there will be a pink dot on your address label as a last reminder.

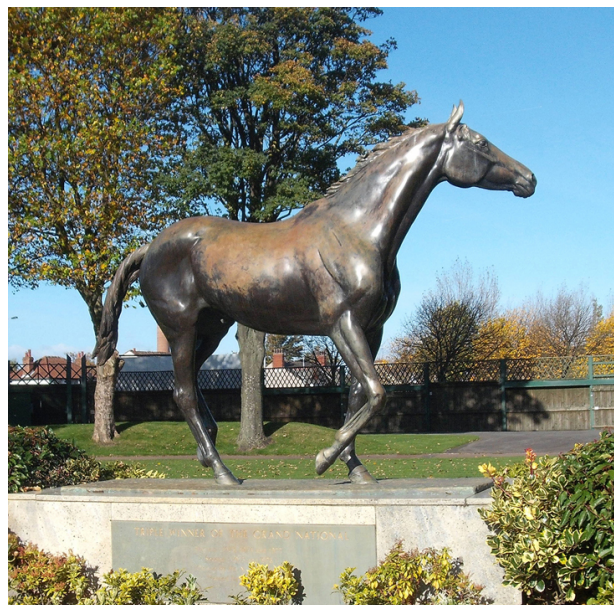
Please send any cheques (payable to North & Midlands Racing Club) to Helen Goodwill, Membership Secretary, 124 Lindsell Rd, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 5NZ.

Any 'paper' non-renewals will automatically be added to the online mailing list assuming we have a current e mail address.

If you pay by bankers order please ensure the sum is set at £12 and also keep the club updated if either your postal and/or e-mail addresses have altered.

RED RUM REMEMBERED – 50 YEARS ON

Harold Heys looks back to 1973 when Red Rum won his first Grand National in what Harold describes as 'the greatest race he ever saw'. See pages 17/18.



Racecourse commentator **Tim Peters** has compiled a list of three-year olds to follow on the flat this year – see pages 18/19.



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COMPETITION NEWS

59's DRAW RESULTS UPDATE

The latest '59's' winners are as follows:

February 4th – 56 – Maureen Dawson

March 4th – 07 – Brendan O'Meara

Your £50 prizes should now be with you.

The winning number is determined by the 'bonus ball' drawn in the UK Lottery on the first Saturday of the month.

Thanks to all who continue to support the draw.

All numbers are currently allocated.

SATURDAY NAPS+ COMPETITION 2022/23

Congratulations to **John Boswell** who receives a £70 prize for winning Round 2 of this winter's competition. **Liz O'Donoghue** finished in 2nd place and wins a £30 prize.

In Round 3, with just two weeks to go, **John Boswell** is again the leader with **Jacob Doyle** the nearest challenger.

ALEX BIRD COMPETITION 2023

Congratulations to **Helen Goodwill** who receives a £70 prize for winning the Cheltenham round in this year's competition. **Sam Doyle Jr** finished in 2nd place and wins a £40 prize.

HERITGE HANDICAPS COMPETITION 2023

In our next issue of Racin' Magazine we shall have details of our summer flat racing competition which starts on Derby Day at Epsom in June. An application form will also be available on the club website in May.

No Snail: The story of L 'Escargot, the horse that foiled Red Rum

David Owen has re-told the story of L 'Escargot in his new book published in 2023 which is now available on Amazon and all good bookshops!

L 'Escargot was a wonder horse, one of only two to have scaled the twin peaks of steeplechasing: the Cheltenham Gold Cup and the Grand National. He won on the biggest stages in Britain and Ireland – and on one of the biggest in the USA. His victories spanned nine seasons. He triumphed on the flat, over hurdles and over fences, and at distances from two miles to the National's gruelling four miles and 856 yards.

When he surged clear of Red Rum – the best Aintree horse ever – to claim victory in the National on that strange, anti-climactic day in 1975, it was one of the most dramatic acts of party-pooping in the history of sport. Yet, for those who had managed his destiny since 1966 from a base on the edge of The Curragh, it meant the fulfilment of a decades-old ambition.

Despite L 'Escargot's remarkable achievements, his name – wildly inappropriate as it was – has largely faded from memory. Looking back, even Ginger McCain, Red Rum's trainer, felt L 'Escargot did not receive the credit he was due. Now, at last, *No Snail* tells the story of this extraordinary, uncomplaining warrior and elevates him to his rightful place in horse racing's pantheon.



<https://www.thenightwatchman.net/buy/no-snail>

POINT TO POINT NEWS WITH ANDY WHITE

The point-to-point season is in full swing with the meetings coming up thick and fast. As always you can find details of point-to-point news and forthcoming meetings at www.pointtopoint.co.uk

Sinnington at Duncombe Park The first Sunday in February saw the Sinnington Hunt meeting at Duncombe Park, Helmsley, North Yorkshire. A year on from a meeting that was affected by hail, sleet, snow and strong winds, this year it was a glorious sunny day with a record crowd in attendance.

As last year, the opening Hunt Members race went to the Joe Wright ridden Point the Way.

There were doubles on the day for Jockeys John Dawson and Will Easterby. Dawson won on Mount Mews for Luci Hughes and Monsun Storm for his wife Alice Easterby now rider / trainer won on Roan in the maiden and Workhardplayhard in the concluding bumper.

The restricted race was won by the locally owned and trained Lifeisahighway ridden by Jack Teal for trainer Bella Sowray. The Novice event was won by the 13-year-old veteran Roycano giving a first point to point winner for jockey Phil Lawrence.



(Left) Runners in the Mixed Open at Duncombe Park

York and Ainsty North and West of Yore at Askham Bryan College

On the 19 February it was the Easterby family who took the honours at this York meeting. Thomas Easterby rode his first point to point winner on Crossgalesfamegame trained by elder brother Will. It was then Will's turn as he rode a double on Hollington and Fascinating Rhythm.

The men's open race was won by the in-form Roycano, once again ridden by Phil Lawrence. Other winners were the Robin Tate trained Diaboleo ridden by Joe Wight and Cousin Pascal trained by Joe O'shea and ridden by Amber Jackson-Fennell.

Yorkshire Jockeys Club Charm Park

Another record crowd attended the Yorkshire Jockeys club meeting on 5th March at Charm Park near Scarborough. Clerk of the course Will Easterby and his team had the course in fantastic condition and once again the meeting attracted horses from around the country.

After last year using the meeting as a stepping stone for a win in the Aintree Foxhunters, the Tom Ellis trained Latenightpass returned to the course against two other rivals in the Ladies Open. This year the race was renamed "The road to Aintree Ladies Open race" and was sponsored by twins Charlotte Russell and Emma Lund celebrating their 40th Birthday. The Gina Andrews ridden odds on Favourite Latenightpass had to fight off a determined challenge from Royal Chant ridden by Rosie Howarth to win narrowly. The Ellis team had other winners on the day with Gina Andrews on Kalabaloo and Jack Andrews on Jetaway Joey in the Men's Open.

Jack Andrews held a comfortable lead in the Maiden Race in the Ellis trained Touch Me Not until falling at the last presenting the race to Gwash ridden by Paddy Barlow. Andrews did complete a double the restricted race on Lagan Valley for Julie Wadland.

MEL ROWLEY – STABLE VISIT – SUNDAY MAY 14TH

The March stable visit was again cancelled at the request of the trainer and has now been re-scheduled for Sunday morning May 14th when there is also racing at **Ludlow** in the afternoon.

This will be NMRC's first stable visit of the year. The yard is located at Morville, Nr Bridgenorth in Shropshire. We expect to arrive mid-morning (time TBC) and will depart in good time to visit Ludlow racecourse for their afternoon meeting.

Mel had her first full season in 2021-22 and sent out 14 winners. Some stars from last season include: *Wishing & Hoping*, *My Bobby Dazzler*, *Ginger Du Val* & *Latitude*.

TRISTAN DAVIDSON – STABLE VISIT – MONDAY MAY 22ND

Tristan holds a dual-purpose licence (flat/jumps) and has been training 'full time' at his stables at Irthington, Carlisle for over 5 years and sent out over 60 winners so far.

Prior to joining the training ranks, Tristan had ridden over 200 point-to-point winners.

We shall visit the yard mid-morning and for those who wish to make a day of it, there is racing at **Carlisle** in the afternoon.

SUSAN CORBETT – STABLE VISIT – SATURDAY JUNE 17TH

Its about 5 years since we visited Susan's yard in the North East and as we now have several members who either run syndicates there or have shares in them we thought it time to have another visit! Susan's horses seem to be coming into form lately, including an ITV televised winner at Kelso on March 25th with **Les's Legacy**.

Andy Gibson (The Cheltenham Trail) runs a syndicate in the yard with **Nulli Secundus** who has so far run in bumper races whilst NMRC Membership Secretary **Helen Goodwill** has a share in **Naughty George** who has had two runs on the flat as a 2yo so far.

But the visit is open to all members irrespective of whether or not you are looking for shares in horses.

There is also racing at nearby **Hexham** in the afternoon for those who like to make a day of it.

HOW TO BOOK FOR ANY OF THE STABLE VISITS ABOVE:

To reserve places(s) please contact Dave Bates (details below) who will send out final details a week before the visit. We also like to leave a donation for the stable staff and will collect £5pp on the day from those adults attending.

Dave Bates (Stable Visits) 01925 574140 bates270@btinternet.com

GORDON ARMISTEAD'S RACING DIARY

Wednesday February 1st Leicester

The first time I went to Leicester future Champion Hurdler Celtic Shot won the opening maiden hurdle. The second time for the same meeting the equivalent race was won by Go Ballistic who finished fourth in a Gold Cup and started favourite for a Grand National. Over twenty years since I was last here and things have gone downhill regarding the standard of the jump meetings. The hurdle track shares the flat course and is overwatered in the summer so gets desperate very easily and the chase track which doesn't get watered is often too firm. Small fields are the result and mostly at a low grade. Racing TV members can get free admission to a whole host of meetings here during the year.

Thursday February 2nd Fakenham

My one previous visit here was in 1990 and I can't remember anything about it. Roads are a lot better today across country but I did that trip out and back in a day and it must have been a long one. This time we stayed in Kings Lynn so the morning trip was short but it still took six hours to get home afterwards.

What a super little course this is and I would recommend anyone who hasn't been to try and get here. For a mid-week card there was a good crowd and the parade ring was ringed all afternoon.

Sometimes the fields can be a bit disappointing here but today was fine and most of the races were competitive.

Saturday February 18th Haydock

As good a National Trials Day as we have had for many a year with Haydock managing to get some of the best ground in the country.

Only a couple in the big race had any prospect of going to Aintree and they were involved in the places. Quick Wave returned to form to hold off Snow Leopardess with Cloudy Glen third. With the weights coming out after the trial because of the late date of Aintree she will go up a few pounds and will be the third highest of the home brigade. She has missed big chunks of time over the last couple of years but has got better the further she goes. Stable mate Cloudy Glen should also go to Aintree but his best form is first time out.

I doubt the Victor Ludorum through much light on the Triumph Hurdle as winner Bo Zenith made hard work of beating a 114 horse and looks like he needs two and a half already. Punta Del Este shaped well on his first start in this country and should now get a handicap mark.

The Prestige Hurdle had a good-looking bunch of future chasers in it but some really underperformed. Winner Makin'yourmindup and runner up Collector's Item who ran almost to the pound from their previous run will be extreme distance chasers in the future. Third home The King of Rythorpe might not quite got home. There were poor efforts from Passing Well, Supreme Gift, and Mr Vango who had all looked better than they showed here.

Famous Clermont looked a very useful hunter chaser cantering home from Envious Editor. He was a cast off for only £5K from Donnchadh Doyle's Irish pointing operation after four moderate efforts having cost €42K as a store horse. He evidently goes to Aintree.

Saturday February 25th Fairyhouse

The Bobbyjo is the main Irish National Trial but this year it went to non-National entry Kemboy who is not the horse he was but still good enough to just hold on. Vanillier beaten only half a length was giving him eight pounds and ran a fine National trial jumping better than he usually does. He has fair weight at Aintree. I didn't like Thyestes Chase winner Carefully Selected as an individual and he and Pencilfulloflead ran pretty moderately. An interesting way to qualify for Aintree was Longhouse Poet unseating at the first but he has now run in a chase this season.

Wee Charlies defeat in the 80-102 handicap hurdle at 16/1 was pretty painful especially as he looked home and hosed from just after the second last.

Not going to Cheltenham but certainly going to one of the spring festivals will be bumper winner Down Memory Lane who looked useful.

Sunday February 26th Naas

The grade 2 novice hurdle produced a tremendous race and two decent animals. Corbetts Cross and Found a Fifty went head-to-head from the home turn flying the last two hurdles and running all the way to the line.

Corbetts Cross dropping from three miles was talked up as next year's Grand National project when transferring to Emmet Mullins. Whether that is true we will see but before then he will head to Cheltenham. Found a Fifty loss little in defeat and he will head to Aintree or Punchestown.

They pulled well clear of some decent maiden winners and graded bumper winner Lily Du Berlais who needs a step up in trip.

They were sixteen seconds faster than the maiden hurdle where Paul Townend rode a super race on Bialystok who jumped moderately, barely got the mile seven and a half and stopped when he hit the front. The runner up Thecompanysergeant is the one for the future and I will be watching for Make The Plan in one of the unplaced maidens after his third run here.

Gigginstown are doing well with their new wave of bumper horses and Stella Story who will stay well wanted it far more than Leopardstown winner Ile Atlantique.

Tuesday February 28th Catterick

Another course I hadn't been to for some time and plenty of work has been done since my last visit. A new parade ring, new entrances, and a new owners and trainers' facility have spruced things up. That is more than can be said for the Bridge House Hotel across the road which looks in a sorry mess having caught fire in 2014. It has evidently been sold recently for £240K so somebody must have plans for the listed building.

It was first wins for seven race maiden Chase a Fortune, nine race maidens Elmount and Lounge Lizard and twenty-one race maiden Lifetime Legend none of them bigger than 11/4.

Fusain outsider of three in the novice chase was left with nothing to beat after Mortlach fell when beaten and graded flat performer and graded hurdle winner Stag Horn showed he will never make a chaser. He did however jump really well and off a mark of only 118 that asset will see him win again.

Saturday March 11th Gowran Park

It is a long time since I set off to go to one meeting and ended up somewhere else. Once going to trials day at Cheltenham it was called off as we passed Stoke so it was a left turn to Southwell. They were running the Great Yorkshire/ Sky Bet Chase there while the awful new grandstand at Doncaster was built.

Here I had intended to go to Navan but frost and snow meant it was off as I was waiting at Liverpool Airport and luckily for one of the few times in the year there was another Irish meeting on a Saturday.

After a novice winning last season's National here we had a horse warming up for Aintree in a beginners chase. Ain't That A Shame had had just the six required starts over fences before today but they included placings behind Galopin des Champs and Stattler in beginners chases. Probably more relevant he had also placed in the Munster National and Paddy Power Handicap Chase at Leopardstown. This was only two and a half miles and he won easily but his price at 20/1 for Aintree where he has ten stone five looks short enough. Tetratema was the top two-year-old of 1919 and was rated a record twelve pounds clear of the second horse in the Free Handicap. He was essentially a sprinter who stretched his stamina out to win the 2000 Guineas but failed in the Derby. Quite why he has one of Ireland's top Hunter Chases named after him I don't know but there was a classy winner today in Ferns Lock. David Christie is mainly a Hunter Chase Specialist with Vaucelet and Winged Leader his flag bearers and this horse is coming along to take over. He will probably miss the Championship Hunter Chases this season but is now six from six including his point wins.

Cheveley Park have reinvested after their great success with the jumpers and they could well have another good one in bumper winner Tullyhill who cost £220K after his point win. He cruised through the race with Patrick Mullins not moving a muscle beating a Gigginstown runner who had chased home two of the Willie Mullins Cheltenham team. He could come to Aintree or more likely go to Punchestown.

The Ellmarie Holden stable is better known for the pointers they sell on like Jonbon and Sir Gerhard but it isn't always that easy. Karuma Grey who cost €130K as a store horse fell in both his points. In division two of the two-mile maiden hurdle he came with a run that was always going to catch leader Libby who was clear two out to win going away. Karuma Grey will now no doubt be off to the sales at a big loss but has the scope to continue improving at a modest level.

While the geldings Maidens were ordinary affairs the winner of the mare's race looked a bit better. Lantry Lady on her debut won by fourteen lengths against some moderate sorts but she stood out in the parade ring and her dam is a half-sister to Annie Power. I fancy she will be in graded company somewhere in the spring.

Sunday March 12th Naas

Leinster National Day and another big race triumph for the combination of Barry Connell and Mikey O'Sullivan. The race looked wide open turning in but course specialist Espanito Bello forged clear from two out to win cosily. He hasn't even mustered up a place away from here and needs it soft so spring targets might be hard to find. Third place here qualified Gabby's Cross for the National and he has got better going up in trip.

Heading to Aintree and the Mersey Novice Hurdle will be Irish Point who made all in the Grade 3 two-mile novice hurdle. Dropping from three Grade 1 places he was getting weight from runner up No Looking Back who

had won a match for a Grade 2. The runner up was probably flattered. I have now been on track for Lily Du Berlais last five runs and she was predicably outpaced again at this trip.

Journey With Me was odds on for the Grade 3 two-mile four novice chase and he made all seeing off the challenge of improving mare Limerick Lace from the last. He is another who could end up at Aintree and his jumping has improved as the season has progressed.

With Wee Charlie going one better than at Fairyhouse and Carnfunnock getting home by a nose in the other handicap hurdle it was nice to be in form going into Cheltenham.

Tuesday March 21st Wetherby

Mainly ordinary stuff but three above average horses on show. Springwell Boy and Hurricane Highway both carried a penalty in the two four novice hurdle and they were the only ones that mattered from a long way out. The former easily took the victory and I imagine he will be heading for Aintree. His jumping will need to be better in graded company. Hurricane Highway will make a staying novice chaser next season.

Indeevar Bleu ran away with the bumper and won by a wide margin. He evidently will be put away now and go novice hurdling next autumn. Ollie Murphy has had lots of promising sorts like this before and he needs one to progress into a proper graded performer.

GORDON ARMISTEAD'S CHELTENHAM REVIEW

Day 1

Supreme Novices

Racing in Ireland you know that even on an ordinary card at any time of year you might see a future Grade 1 winner running in a bumper. I saw Galvin win his bumper at Roscommon one July and now Marine Nationale at the end of May last year in what was basically a summer jumps meeting at Punchestown.

Barry Connell who was stood about five yards behind me likes to shout his horse's home and in the sparsely occupied stands he gave it some welly. He told everybody that he would win the Supreme from before he won the Royal Bond and he took what looked a deep renewal very easily. Punchestown will be next but where he goes next year may depend on where Constitution Hill goes.

Facile Vega was beaten fair and square and while he will no doubt take the winner on again at Punchestown it will be hard to turn the tables. Third home Diverge appeared to be ridden for a place and might have beaten his stable mate with a more aggressive ride. Fourth Inthepocket needs at least two and a half miles while where they go with High Definition I wouldn't know.

Arkle

This played out just as expected with Dysart Dynamo setting the pace for the big two. I had backed El Fabiolo at the DRF in a really good Irish Arkle and his form looked better than Jonbons. Again no excuse for Jonbon who was just not as good as the winner. Both look like they could stay a bit further and it is probable that it will be the two mile four for Jonbon at Aintree. El Fabiolo however will stick to two miles, go to Punchestown and then try and take on Energumene next season.

Ultima

The double up for Corach Rambler under a super ride from Derek Fox. It will be on to Aintree now for which he was immediately made favourite. He will need luck in running coming from behind and the big open spaces of the run in might not suit but he will certainly stay. The other National runners hardly advertised their chances. Threeunderthrufive and Happygolucky finished but well beaten. Cloudy Glen did what he does on his second run of the season which was run poorly. Something appears wrong with Remastered and The Big Breakaway barely went a stride. Of the others The Goffer patently didn't get home and there is a valuable two-mile four novice handicap at Punchestown which might be up his street.

Champion Hurdle

Being an old cynic, all the talk of Constitution Hill being the second coming was water off a ducks back. Beating a regressive although ex-champion twice is one thing but he had to do it in a Championship race himself to justify the talk. A nine-length easy win from a top-class horse goes somewhere there. I am looking forward to seeing him in the flesh at Aintree while his connections can ponder the various scenarios for next season over the summer. My guess is it will be the same again. State Man has the build of a chaser and the Arkle will be the target next season.

Mares Hurdle

The best renewal of this race but only two ever mattered in a slowly run race as Honeysuckle went off into the sunset with a super victory. She might not have been the best Champion ever but she has captured the public's

acclaim like few horses have. At the DRF this year she was applauded in the parade ring before the race as Rachel Blackmore got on board. I was on course for several of her wins and later on people were running off the stands to applaud her back in- me included.

It is always the winning jockey who is said to have ridden a good race but Johnnie Burke on Love Envoy rode a super race. Knowing they were mainly hold up horses he settled his usually strong pulling partner in front and set a pace to suit him and almost pulled it off. It is to be hoped she can win the Group 1 mares race at Punchestown.

Some poor efforts in behind especially Marie's Rock and Epatante who might well follow her fellow Champion into retirement.

Boodles Fred Winter

It looked the usual impossible race with bits of form all over the place and a whole host of plot horses. One of my less scientific betting rules is that if a horse is too big that I am going to be very annoyed if it wins it has to be backed. Here was a case. Jazzy Matty beat the favourite Tekao when I was at Navan in November by four lengths and was thirteen pounds better off with Mikey O'Sullivan riding yet was 20/1. He is a half-brother to Delta Work so is probably not just a juvenile and will stay a trip.

National Hunt Chase

I don't know what price Gaillard Du Mesnil was three out but it will have been bigger than the 10/11 he returned. He is in at Aintree where he has eleven stone which is plenty high enough for what he has achieved. Mister Coffey is also in the National but is a professional loser.

Day 2

Ballymore

As with the supreme it looked a deep race but it ended up with an easy win for Impaire Et Passe without him being asked too much. He looked like he could easily drop back to two miles and be a Champion Hurdle candidate in an ordinary year. It will be interesting to see what trip he tackles at Punchestown. Runner up Gaelic Warrior jumped straight for the most part and the step up in trip seemed to suit. He has the size to jump fences next season as does third home Champ Kiely who was a very hard ride hanging out most of the way. He did well to be placed. Good Hand couldn't follow his stable mate Marine Nationale and is another for chasing. Hermes Allen was very disappointing in sixth beaten by Marble Sands who he had beaten over thirty lengths earlier in the season. He goes to Aintree for the three miler and is better than this.

Browns Advisory

Not the best renewal but a super race and a really game winner. When I saw him win his two races at Cheltenham earlier in the season talk of winning this race just seemed farfetched. His jumping and enthusiasm just puts his rivals under pressure and that proved enough. He will struggle next season in open company. Runner up Gerri Colombe was outpaced down the hill but just stayed on to nearly run the leader down. He looks more a National sort than a Gold Cup horse. Sir Gerhard didn't jump or stay. This time last year there was talk of a Champion Hurdle campaign this season so he wasn't meant to end up here and where he goes next will be interesting.

Champion Chase

For the second year running one of the two main contenders was beaten with a circuit to go as Edwardstone ran no sort of race. Energumene jumped and travelled all the way and it was easy. He will go to Punchestown. Captain Guinness will no doubt be there as well to pick up place money.

Cross Country

This has become a National trial for those near the top of the weights. Delta Work had too much at the end for Galvin and will meet his rival on seven pounds better terms at Aintree. He will need to travel better early on than he did last year. Galvin doesn't strike me as a winner at Aintree. It was interesting to see Keith Donoghue back riding a winner for Gordon Elliot. Third home Franco de Port is also in the National but it was disappointing to see him beaten so far after reasonable efforts recently in Grade 1's.

Bumper

The criterium race at Leopardstown came up trumps again with the same first two as at the DRF. A Dream to Share is a son of multiple Group 1 sprint winner Muhaarar and has done his rivals for speed in his bumpers. There haven't even been a handful of hurdle winners by the sire so it will be interesting to see how it goes next season. Before that he will be at Punchestown. His trainer John Kiely who only stopped riding out three years ago at the age of 82 when he broke his leg has sent out just one other winner this season besides this horse but as always known what to do with a good one. I had thought John Gleason might be found out in the big

field but he was super cool. Some of the Mullins contingent will be at Punchestown as well and there may be some new names.

Day 3

Turners

I really liked the way Stage Star won his novice at Warwick back in November before it all seemed to fall apart later that month at Newbury. Paul Nicholls got him back for the win on trials day and he won this with another all the way display. He will probably go to Aintree. Next season the Ryanair would seem an obvious target. He needs to go left-handed and most of the graded two mile four chases before then are on right-handed courses so how he gets there will be interesting.

Notlongtillmay ran a tremendous race for a very good trainer in Laura Morgan. He might not be easy to place off a mark in the 150's.

I had wanted to take on Mighty Potter at the DRF but there were problems with all the opposition that day either trip, jumping, ability or attitude. His poor run here last season was also a worry for an odds-on shot. Ridden two out he then hung right across the course and it didn't look good. He redeemed himself at Punchestown last year but the two-mile four Grade 1 Novice Chase in Ireland is at Fairyhouse over Easter so I guess he will go there. I was disappointed in Appreciate It who I thought would eventually step up to three miles but he found nil from the last. We will see where he goes.

Pertemps

Those who were at the preview night will know I gave Good Time Jonny a good shout in the Pertemps and it was never in doubt. Apart from that is for the first two mile seven furlongs of the race. His build up races- Seven-furlong maiden, two-mile beginners chase (beaten seventy lengths), third in the series qualifier, and then two-mile handicap (detached at halfway) might not be textbook. However, Tony Martin is a good trainer for handicap hurdles -in fact for anything as he has had Grade 1 winners, an Ebor winner and a Melbourne Cup second. I have been following the horse since I saw him win at Gowran in 2021 waiting for the right race. Jockey Liam McKenna still claims five but rode his first winner over ten years ago and was excellent here.

Ryanair

Envoi Allen was once the second coming but was here as super sub for Allaho and carried out his duties to the letter. Once he lost his unbeaten record when falling here as a novice chaser all sorts seemed to go wrong and he was up and down in distance. He looks like the horse he was meant to be now although what happened at Kempton remains a mystery. I tipped him and backed him without the favourite but could have got twice the odds if I had known that Shishkin would jump and travel so poorly. Envoi Allen is in the National but I can't see him running there while Shishkin will go three miles at Aintree which will be interesting. Hitman probably ran a personal best in third as did French Dynamite in fourth. Blue Lord was just poor again and there will be some head scratching about him.

Stayers

This looked ripe for a turn up and Sire des Berlais who had shown little all season supplemented his excellent festival record. He won at Aintree last season so will probably go there. My place only on Dasher Drasher was landed and for a long time I thought he was finally going to win. Flooring Porter will go to Aintree as he does go right-handed but is on the downgrade while Paisley Park can't be far off retirement as things were perfect for him here and he failed to get involved. I have liked Blazing Khal from when I saw him win his maiden but he had a poor preparation.

Plate

Seddon seemed a horse on the downgrade when he was shipped out to Ireland. He also doesn't look great having stringhalt in both rear legs but has been totally rejuvenated. I have seen both his prep runs and he had the chase win at Leopardstown won over a mile out but that was a 0-123 and this was totally different off a mark twenty pounds higher. However, he is now with John McConnell who is just an excellent trainer of any sort of animal. I first noticed him with a horse called Pearl of the West who won at Cheltenham in the autumn and then at the Punchestown Festival but amazingly he has been training since the 2000/01 season. Jockey Ben Harvey rode a winner on his very first ride in the Ulster National and did me a good turn on Some Neck over the cross-country course at Cheltenham at 20/1 for only his third or fourth win. Seddon had things easy on the run in as Fugitif again didn't try too hard from the last.

Mares Novice

I couldn't have Luccia in this and she found little from the last on the first occasion she has been challenged. Winner You Were It Well made all an looks a real stayer and again she highlighted how poorly Hermes Allen was in the Ballymore as he is the only horse to beat her this season. She has alternatives off trying to step up into Grade 1's or going chasing.

Kim Muir

Mr Incredible should easily make the cut for the National and ran a fair trial here under top weight in third. His trouble is that he is not in any way straightforward having refused to race and pulled himself up in the past. He looks and out and out stayer. Runner up Stumptown might just be better back to the flat three miles and being only six he could improve next season. Another Irish claiming jockey riding the winner in Pa King who still claims five under rules but has had plenty of point winners. It was an unusual double for trainer Sam Curling who produced Supreme winner Marine Nationale in his main job as a point trainer but couldn't run him due to covid.

Day 4

Triumph Hurdle

Lossiemoth turned the tables on Gala Marceau from the DRF in a race dominated by the Mullins fillies. She will go to Punchestown and will surely be heading to the Mares race here next season. I wonder if either Gala Marceau or Zenta will go to Aintree as that race looks open to any of the Irish runners. I liked fourth home Gust of Wind as an individual at the DRF and he has the scope to be a chaser in time. Way down the field another Mullins runner Je Garde travelled well for a long way on his first run for the stable. Disappointment of the race Blood Destiny pulled too hard after being messed around by a couple of wayward rivals.

Albert Bartlett

Racing over two miles appeared to have set Corbetts Cross alight as he took a real pull from early on and it says plenty to his ability that he was still there at the last. It doesn't look good for the future that he ran out and I imagine that will be it for the season for him.

Winner Stay Away Fay looks a real out and out stayer always being in the front rank. He will be three-mile novice chasing and with Hermes Allen going for the three miler at Aintree that could mean he could go to Punchestown which would be good. Affordale Fury ran in a strange race at Navan when they went too fast and he fell at the last early in the season. A break seems to have done him good. Three Card Brag was well talked up but appeared not to get home.

Gold Cup

A super winner after things might have not looked great early on. He is a different horse this year relaxing in his races rather than the tear away he was in his novice season. He will take some beating if he stays sound but that seemed the situation for last year's winner. His Martin Pipe handicap win off 142 always comes up but the really amazing thing was he was sent off fifth favourite at 8/1. Ahead of him in the betting and receiving weight were a dual Grade 1 winning chaser in Gentleman de Mee and Arkle second in Gabynako.

Bravemansgame has had plenty of critics but must have silenced them for good as he ran a fine race but was just beaten by a better horse. Conflated hadn't the pace of the first two but appeared to stay. He is in the National but I would be surprised if he went for that with the Bowl as an alternative. It is interesting that his jockey Sam Ewing still needs two chase winners to be able to ride in the National. Fourth home Noble Yeats will certainly be there and all he did here was stay. Protektorat isn't going to win a Gold Cup and the National next season could be an alternative.

Hewick will evidently miss Aintree after his fall when running a great race. A Plus Tard at least showed signs of life and was going fine when he had to jump both the fallers at the sixth last. He could easily turn up at Aintree.

Mares Chase

Two good novice mares fought out the finish with for once the good little one beating the good big one. This looks Impervious's trip but she is not in the Grade 1 at Fairyhouse to take on the males. It will be interesting to see where she goes as she has not had a hard season. Allegorie De Vassy jumped better given a lead and maybe she can step up in trip. Jeremys Flame didn't run her race as Zambella completely turned the form round from Huntingdon.

Martin Pipe

Another good Irish claimer in Aiden Kelly. He has been J P McManus's go to seven-pound claimer for the last few months with half his career wins coming since December. A third winner for the northern yards with Iroko was a good return and the Guerriero/ Greenall combo have had a breakthrough season.

NMRC'S 'GRAND NATIONAL' BOOK COMPETITION

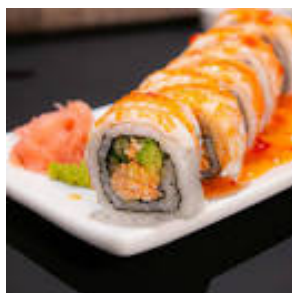
This time the winner will receive a copy of 'Horse Racing's Strangest Tales'.

Entrants need to work out which ten past Grand National winners are indicated by the photos below chosen by Phil Evans & Harold Heys. It's a bit like catchphrase so 'say what you see' to find the answers. We have made it a bit harder this time so you probably won't need all ten correct to win !

Once you have your answers, please e mail to info@northernracingclub.com or post to NMRC at 53 Dalebrook Rd, Sale, M33 3LB. Don't forget to add your name/address! Closing date for entries will be Saturday 29th April. If there is more than one all correct entry than a draw will be made to determine the winner.



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8



9



10

We had a very good entry for the last competition to find the nine UK/Irish racecourses and the winner was Michael Wheeler from Oldham.

The answers last time were (1) Fairyhouse (2) *Inspector Wexford* (3) Bangor on Dee (banger/sausage in photo) (4) Redcar (5) *Roman Bath* (6) Cork tree (7) Goodwood (aka the most expensive wood in the world) (8) The character is from *Willow* but the actor is Warwick Davis (9) *The Beverley Sisters*.

Florence Nagle 1894 - 1988

Nowadays the number of female trainers doesn't even register as an issue with most racing followers but how many of us can remember the story of the woman who won racing equality in 1970?

Florence Nagle was ready to begin her fourth season as a licensed horse trainer. It marked four years since the 76-year-old animal lover dared to challenge the authority of the Jockey Club and struck another blow in the battle for equal rights. Against all advice, she took the all-male club to the High Court for their refusal to grant her a licence – and defeated them. But what she regretted was that it was necessary for her to fight at all. 'I did it out of the best interest for racing,' says Mrs Nagle. 'It was silly of them to force me to fight. I believe in a benevolent autocracy ruling the sport.'



At her Westerlands stud near Petworth, Mrs Nagle trained the 15 horses she owned and pride of place was four-year-old West Partisan. According to the Encyclopedia of British Horseracing, Nagle trained her first racehorse in 1920, the Irish-bred colt Fernley. Her fascination with the sport stemmed from a much earlier time pre-dating her decision to concentrate on breeding dogs but it was particularly the breeding aspect of racehorses she was drawn to. Nagle owned the winner of the Newport Nursery Handicap in 1932, a horse named Solano, and a reporter recorded that "While Solano is not Mrs Nagle's first winner, it is some years since the 'rifle green, red cross-belts' caught the judge's eye". On 5 July 1935, she had a runner Comanche at Newmarket.

Nagle entered a runner in the 1937 Derby; that horse, Sandsprite, ridden by John Crouch at odds of 100–1, finished second to Mid-day Sun. This was the first horse Nagle bred herself and reactions from commentators were mixed. One report described the horse as a "commanding individual", whereas another reporter's opposing opinion was revealed by Nagle when after Sandsprite's success at Epsom she stated "Not bad for a horse which one newspaper said was only good enough to give rides at the seaside".

Sandsprite's dam was Wood Nymph, a mare purchased by Nagle for 240 guineas. She wanted to have her mated by the stallion Sansovino but had to settle for using his son, Sandwich, as she could not afford his stud fee. Sandsprite had several other outings in which he gained second or third placings, but was put down at the onset of his stud career after breaking a leg.

One of Nagle's early equine purchases was 15-year-old Rose of England, the winner of the 1930 Oaks, for 3,500 guineas. The mare had already produced the 1937 St. Leger winner, Chulmleigh, and the 1939 top winning two-year-old, British Empire. In Nagle's ownership she foaled Westerlands Rose, by the stallion

Colombo who produced several winners. These included Westerlands Chalice, by Chamossaire, who won three races in 1957; and Game Rose, by Big Game, another winner during the 1950s. Other winning progeny from Westerlands Rose were Westerlands Champagne, Westerlands Prince and Westerlands Rosebud. These five horses accounted for ten race wins between them.

At the December Newmarket sales in 1944 Nagle bought the two-year-old Carpatica, by the Epsom Derby winner, Hyperion out of Campanula, the 1,000 Guineas Stakes winner, for a record 15,000 guineas with the intention of looking after the filly's training at her stables in Petworth. She also bought a five-year-old mare in foal, Hay Harvest, for 5,500 guineas. When bred to Sayajirao, Carpatica produced the 1950s winner, Cavina. One of the main winners in the Nagle stables in the early 1960s was Gelert, trained by Nagle and owned by Miss Newton Deakin. Sired by Owen Tudor out of Westerlands Rosebud, he won a race at Ascot. His dam had been successfully raced in the early 1950s and then proved herself as a useful brood.

In the first half of the 20th century women trainers were not unknown – Norah Wilmot was training horses for The Queen. But women trained in an unofficial capacity, and were forced to employ men to hold the training licence on their behalf, or to have licences in their husbands' names. Thus, beginning in 1932, the divorced



Nagle employed Alfred Stickley, a licensed trainer, to work at her stables in the capacity of head lad.

Mahwa, by Match III out of Media, was owned by Newton Deakin and was the first winning horse to be officially listed as trained by Nagle.

As late as 1975, she trained twelve horses and recommended feeding them some seaweed to provide iodine. She was also a great believer in the beneficial effects of fresh air, insisting that her horses' top

stable doors were permanently left open. She was vehemently opposed to the vaccination of horses against equine influenza, and challenged a Jockey Club decision to make vaccination compulsory. She thought the hardest part of animal breeding was "to breed for 'guts'. You can produce lovely looking animals that go well – till they are on a race course with a stiff race to win."

In the 1980s, still dissatisfied with the lack of opportunities for women jockeys, Nagle sponsored a race at Kempton Park, The Florence Nagle Girl Apprentices'. The first event took place in 1986; after the race John Oaksey wrote in the Daily Telegraph that Nagle was no doubt looking down from her celestial cloud with approval. She subsequently wrote to inform him that she was still alive, but that when the time came she expected to end up in a hotter place – "and there to meet most of her racing friends". Nagle left a bequest in her will to ensure the race's survival.

Nagle died at her home, Little Mayfield in West Chiltington, Sussex, at the age of 94.

GRAND NATIONAL SWEEPSTAKE 2023

North & Midlands Racing Club will be repeating its Grand National sweepstake for 2023.

It will again cost £5 per entry and all entrants will be drawn a horse* on the eve of the race and notified accordingly - via email or text. If more than 40 tickets are sold then some horses will have a second ticket allocated – where this is the case any prizes won will be shared between all ticket holders for the horse concerned. * Race card numbers used in the draw.

The prize fund has been over £300 in recent years and be allocated as follows:

1st place – 50%
2nd place – 25%
3rd place – 15%
4th place – 10%

In the unlikely event that less than 40 tickets are sold and one of the first four places has no ticket allocated, then the next placed horse will be used for the prize(s) affected.

If anyone is unlucky enough to be allocated a race card number of a horse that does not start on the Saturday, the entrant(s) affected will be given a full refund.

There will be two ways to enter as below:

1. Postal entries can be made until Friday April 14th. Please send to North & Midlands Racing Club at 53 Dalebrook Rd, Sale, M33 3LB together with cheque payable to North & Midlands Racing Club for number of entries required. Please include name/address/email/phone details.
2. Online entries can be made until 6pm on Friday April 14th also, with direct bank payments accepted (contact Phil Evans at info@northernrcingclub.com for bank details to remit to).

HOW THE DRAW IS MADE

1. The draw will be made 'online' using a random number generator (and at least two people present) at 8pm on Friday 14th April.
2. All ticket holders will then be advised of the race card number drawn for their horse(s).

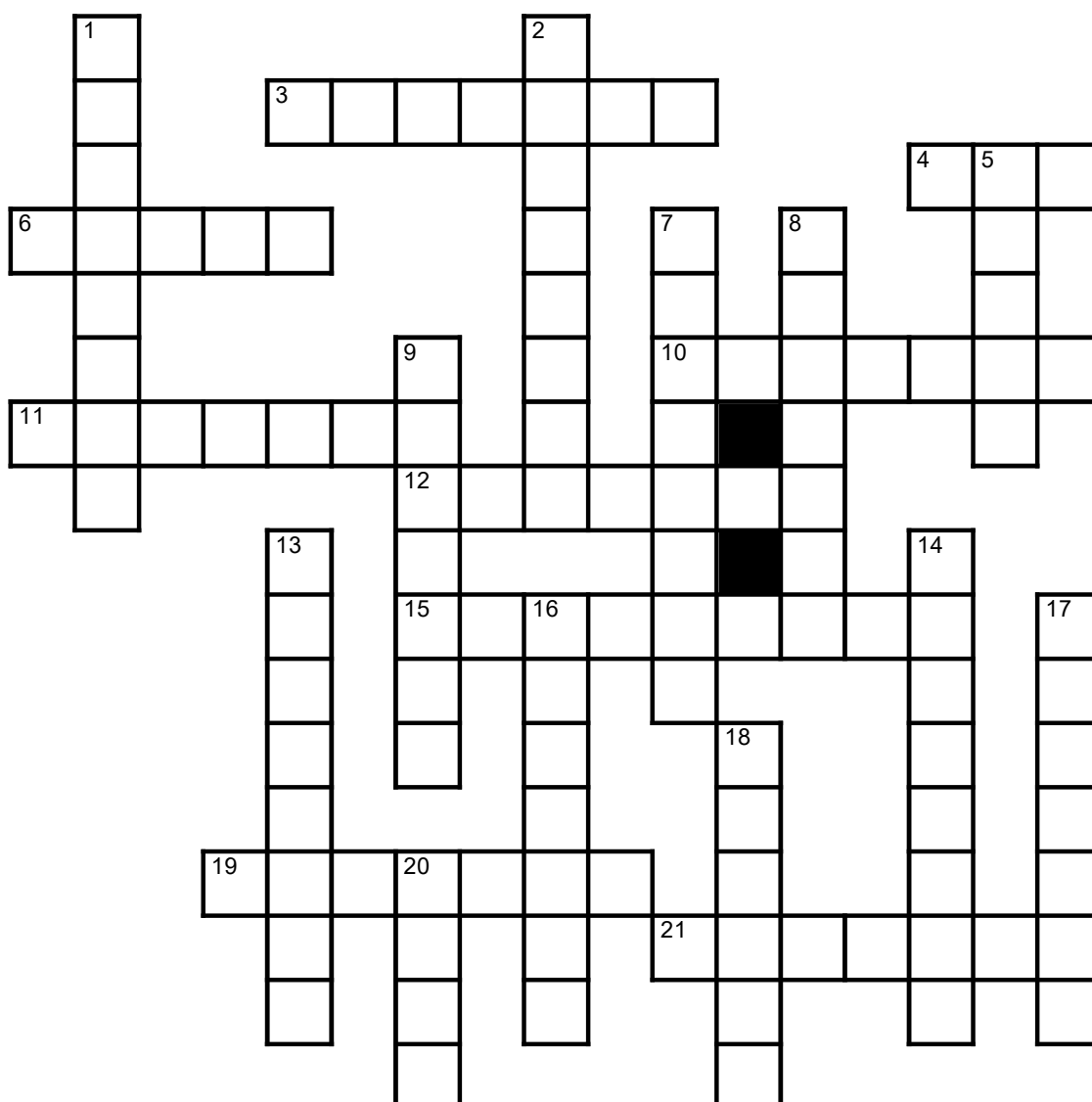
OTHER DETAILS

Prizes will be forwarded to the winners as soon as possible after the date of the race.



MAL BOYLES GRAND NATIONAL ANAGRAM PUZZLE

Simply unravel the names below and then fit them into the grid. The puzzle is not as difficult as it seems, as there is just one answer for 3-4-6 letter names.



REOLGLTIR (2018) – MURDER (1973) – TPESWIT (1986) – ONIANFVO (1967) – MMOONME (2009)

EDBAEINR (2002) – OJBBOBY (1999) – SFRKIRM (1990) – YRTTOLE (1839) – EORIBRCE (1983)

TRGRITA (1982) – USBCTIR (1979) – ONGAL (1966) – MKLIRO (1962) DEWOLLOT (1972)

IYPCSF (1971) – PATYIGR (1970) – ILDTANA (1981) – GPSIR (1927) SEB (1956) – LATE (1952)

Once you have your answers, please e mail to info@northernracingclub.com or post to NMRC at 53 Dalebrook Rd, Sale, M33 3LB. Don't forget to add your name/address! Closing date for entries will be Saturday 29th April. If there is more than one all correct entry than a draw will be made to determine the winner.

The winner of this competition will receive a copy of David Owen's new book about the career of the great racehorse L 'Escargot as described on page 2 of this issue of Racin' Magazine.

CATTERICK & G.R.I.Y NEWS By Charlotte Russell & Emma Stevenson

Huge congratulations to Patrick Neville who had his first Cheltenham Festival winner with The Real Whacker. Patrick is based at Ann Duffield's near Leyburn and has a team of about 24 horses, including The Real Whacker's half-sister, called My Favourite Sister – keep an eye out for her!

We're excited to see where he goes next with suggestions of a visit to Punchestown at the end of April.

Ruth Jefferson's Sounds Russian was running a great race in the Gold Cup until he was unfortunately brought down five from home. Ruth reports that he is sound and hopefully we will see him again soon.

The opening day of the flat turf season is quickly upon us at Doncaster and Yorkshire looks like it will be well represented in the Lincoln as the county makes up a third of the entries! Our flat preview will be coming soon so look out for it on our social media channels.

It also signifies the return of the Go Racing In Yorkshire Future Stars Apprentice Series and this year we will be following Ryan Sexton who won the series last year with a whopping 75 points. He is based in Malton with Adrian Keatley and looks to have a bright future ahead of him. You can find out more about Ryan on the GRIY website.

A promotional poster for Middleham Open Day. The top half has a teal background with a white silhouette of a horse's head and a stylized 'M' logo. Text on the teal background includes 'MIDDLEHAM OPEN DAY', 'GOOD FRIDAY | 7 APRIL | 9AM', 'TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR 20% DISCOUNT BY USING THE CODE 'GRIY20' WHEN PURCHASING YOUR TICKETS*', and '*DISCOUNT CODES CAN ONLY BE USED IN ADVANCE OF THE DAY THROUGH ONLINE PURCHASE'. The bottom half features a photograph of a woman smiling next to a horse, with a child visible in the background. At the bottom, it says 'TICKETS AVAILABLE AT MIDDLEHAMOPENDAY.CO.UK'.

The search for the Yorkshire Wonder Horse will become more competitive over the flat season and we caught up with Mark Walford, the trainer of It Just Takes Time who is currently in the lead with four wins across the Yorkshire courses. Will they manage the other five by the end of December? You can see what he had to say here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJbc4-RysMU>.

As the Easter holidays approach, The Yorkshire courses in action will have lots of family fun planned and don't forget that under 18's race free!

There's also the **Middleham Open Day on Good Friday, April 7** and you can get a discount on pre-booked tickets by quoting 'GRIY20' so go along and get involved <https://www.middlehamopenday.co.uk/>.

The team at **Catterick Racecourse** are under starters orders for the start of the 2023 Flat season which gets underway with the Easter Family Day on Wednesday 12 April, the first of 17 fixtures at the course.

One of three popular family days this season, the Easter Family Day will offer free children's entertainment alongside the racing action including a giraffe slide, bouncy castle and Easter themed photo opportunities as well as an Easter Egg Hunt.

Alongside the family fun, there will be an action packed seven race card to enjoy throughout the afternoon, with the first race scheduled for 2.10pm and the last race at 5.20pm.

Other highlights this Flat season include the return of the Yorkshire Beer Festival Race Day, in association with The Pennine Brewing Co. on Saturday 23 September, as well as a new Gin Festival Race Day on Saturday 10 June. The ever-popular Ladies' Day and family fun days return in August, while the William Hill Catterick Dash, the feature race of the season, takes place on Saturday 21 October.

Save on your admission this Flat season by booking at least 48 hours ahead of each race day. Visit www.catterickbridge.co.uk or call the racecourse office on 01748 811478 to book your tickets.

Half a century back to the greatest race I ever saw BY HAROLD HEYS

MOST memorable race you've ever seen? It's a tough question. Perhaps that Sedgefield seller where the 33-1 shot you'd stuck your last tenner on got up on the line? I have a few contenders. The last race ever at Manchester when Lester took Fury Royal through for a momentous victory? Frankel – and a desperately ill Henry Cecil – in the Juddmonte at York? Aldaniti's Grand National with Bob Champion on board? Brigadier Gerard's only defeat? Nijinsky pipped in the Arc? Done all those – except for that Sedgefield fortune.

However, my "greatest race" memory goes back exactly 50 years to March 31, 1973. Yes, it was the day Red Rum won his first Grand National, coming out of the clouds to pip the mighty Aussie import Crisp – who was giving him 23 lbs – just yards from the line. Breathtaking!

For a mile and a half Brian Fletcher on "Rummy" had stalked Richard Pitman on Crisp, slowly closing what had been at one time a 30-length gap over the other joint favourite. The leader hadn't put a foot wrong, except for a slight stumble at the first. And behind him were some really good horses such as L'Escargot and Spanish Steps, who finished third and fourth. But, sadly, Pitman put a foot wrong – or rather his right hand.

Everyone knows now – even after half-a century – that after leading over the last, still some 15 lengths clear, Pitman gave a suddenly-tiring Crisp a smack with his whip instead of keeping him steadied with a firm grip on the reins. The BBC film of the run-in shows Crisp sway sharply to his left, about four or five horse widths. Instead of spurring him on, the crack took him off the line to the elbow and Pitman had to drag him back into shape as Red Rum closed quickly, straight as a die, Fletcher holding him together and racing on remorselessly.

Crisp still led past the elbow – but he seemed to be going up and down on the spot. He held on but, just a few yards from the end of the furlong run-in, Fletcher, as cool as a fresh-from-the-fridge cucumber, sailed past with perfect timing.

Pitman was devastated. "It was a schoolboy error. I shouldn't have gone for the whip in the right hand," he told *RacingTV* in a recent interview. But within a few moments, he had put the crushing disappointment behind him and was thrilled at the exhilarating ride Crisp had given him all the way round Aintree. Well, almost all the way.

And those fences were rather more formidable than they are today. "It was," he recalled, "the most enjoyable ride I have ever had. It's amazing. People still talk about it, nearly 50 years on." Just like we are doing now!

Red Rum, of course went on to win the Grand National again in 1974 and finish second in 1975 and 1976, before winning again in 1977 ridden this time by Tommy Stack.

Why was Fletcher overlooked? I told the tale in an article for *Racin'* a few years ago: Ginger McCain had lost patience with Fletcher who was a bit rough and ready. Ginger felt he hadn't ridden out "Red" in a race at Newcastle where they went down narrowly. Fletcher told the Press that he felt the horse wasn't as good as he had expected and said he wasn't given a good "feel." McCain didn't like the idea of his jockey giving his opinion to the Press before talking to him and he put Ron Barry up in the Hennessy to get a second opinion. Ron thought the horse was in good shape.

Ginger said in his book *My Colourful Life* that he had always intended to put Fletcher back on board but after the Hennessy they bumped into each other on the weighing-room steps. Ginger said "Hello" and asked how he was, but Fletcher "just walked past me." He added: "Well, as far as I was concerned, that was the end of Brian Fletcher."

It was that simple. Perhaps Brian didn't hear, perhaps he was distracted. Perhaps he was indeed still smarting and sulking. Who knows? Brian got a call from the trainer telling him, according to his book *My Rum Life*, that he was being "dropped from Red Rum in all future engagements."

At about that time "without a word of warning" his wife Barbara walked out on him, taking their son Andrew with her. At the age of 29 he had lost everything he had ever lived for. He readily took all the blame for his marriage break-up. He had been so engrossed in racing and the desperate urge to ride winners. "For so long in my life it was all that mattered."

In 1976, County Durham-born Fletcher suffered a fractured skull in a fall which effectively ended his career in the saddle. After 25 years farming near West Auckland, he moved to a 38-acre farm in Carmarthenshire to breed Welsh cobs and keep sheep. He died in 2017 aged 69.

Pitman, now 80, moved into the media and became a successful presenter and writer. I remember in 1990 taking racehorse owner Bert Proos to Aintree on the day before the National. Bert was a friend who lived close to my home in Darwen and his smart chaser Rinus was among the favourites for the big race the next day. I introduced him to old pal Fred Shawcross who was working with the TV lads. He introduced Bert to Pitman and they had a good natter live in the box. Rinus finished a brave third to Mr Frisk the following day.

Crisp had three races the following season. After a warm-up over hurdles, he won at Newbury and then took on Rummy again in a match at Doncaster. He won but sustained a minor injury and trainer Fred Winter decided to retire him. Sir Chester Manifold's gallant chaser went hunting and had eight enjoyable seasons galloping over the Yorkshire countryside. He was laid to rest under a flowering cherry tree close to the entrance to the Zetland Estate there. Red Rum became quite a celebrity. He lived till he was 30 and is buried by the winning post at Aintree.

Crisp v Red Rum! What a race! What a finish! Was it really 50 years ago?

TIM PETERS FLAT HORSES TO FOLLOW IN 2023 – COMPILED BY BRIAN GOODWILL

These are my three-year-old flat horses to follow in 2023.

ANIMAL INSTINCTS

Last season I called plenty of nice two-year old horses such as Local Dynasty and Streets Of Gold, but the juvenile that impressed me the most was the James Ferguson trained **ZOOLOGY**. He made a winning debut at Yarmouth's September Eastern Festival over six furlongs and romped home by four lengths. I remember seeing him in the paddock that day and he was seemingly doing everything wrong when being walked round in front of the viewing public. He was loud and seemed to be on edge throughout. You could certainly argue he was a negative that day, such was his demeanour, but on the racecourse he blew the opposition away. The third that day (Proverb) went on to win his next three races (including a Listed contest), but he was readily outpaced by Zoology. It was the manner of the victory that excited me, and instantly, I thought I could be watching a potential Group One performer. Clearly connections thought so too because he then rocked up in the Group One Middle Park stakes at Newmarket just eleven days later. And despite only beating one rival home on the Rowley Mile course I felt there were reasons for not finishing closer. He got very restless in the stalls that day and also raced freely and on the wrong part of the track. Despite being well beaten I think he will have learnt a lot from the experience and the form of the race looks strong (the 4th won at the Breeders Cup afterwards). His BHA official rating is 93, but I'll be very surprised if he is not contesting races at the highest level during his three-year-old career.

John + Thady Gosden;

I was taken by a number of their youngsters last campaign. John Gosden can often unearth a nice horse at Dunstall Park, Wolverhampton. And on the 15th of October he introduced **QUANTUM CAT** to the all-weather at unfancied odds of 14/1. The son of Kitten's Joy was taking on more experienced rivals and broke slowly and ran green for much of the eight-and-a-half furlongs. Quantum Cat got up on the line with a late flourish under a very good educational Kieran O'Neill ride. The four horses who finished behind the winner are all rated in the early 80s and I would like to think the Gosden horse could be considerably better than that. He does have an American pedigree which could open up options to North America in time, but the yard have had success with Kitten's Joy progeny before - Roaring Lion the obvious example, and if this horse can be as half as successful as him, then the future looks rosy.

The filly **BRIDESTONES** won a 1m 1/2f Fillies' Novice Stakes at Yarmouth's final meeting in October. She made a winning debut and did so in impressive fashion, as she was merely pushed out to win without the use of the whip. She handled the softer conditions well and it remains to be seen if she will require that type of ground to be seen at her best, but she moved very well throughout, and I don't see better ground being a hindrance. The second division of this novice

event was not far off a second slower than Bridestones victory, and she is the type to progress next turf season and to pick up some black type.

The other Gosden runner I wish to markup is one that has just a BHA rating of 79. That horse is called **CEANNA**. The George Strawbridge owned filly has been a work in progress and came to my attention when running sixth at Wolverhampton. She got no run that day behind a very progressive horse called Embrace. Whilst she wouldn't have beaten the winner, she would have probably finished second. Ceanna then went to Southwell and under a confident Robert Havlin won with a fair bit in hand. I think she will continue to improve and they have a handicap mark to go and exploit. The mark seems lenient.

JULIET BRAVO

No, not the Police drama on television back in the 1980s, but **JULIET SIERRA** could make into a viable classic contender in the spring. The Juddmonte filly made her debut on Newmarket's July Course when finishing second to the progressive Streets Of Gold. She then went on to win her next two races which included a Group Three at Salisbury, before finishing a respectable fifth in the Group One Cheveley Park Stakes behind stable companion, Lezoo. She is from the Bated Breath family which often improve with time and I am hopeful she can mix it at the highest level for Ralph Beckett in 2023.

DON'T WHINE, THIS ONE COULD SPARKLE

Having spoken about Bridestones earlier, there was a filly that finished fourth in that race that really caught my eye. Her name is **PROSECCO** and she is trained by Andrew Balding, and runs in the colours of the Coolmore operation. Needing two handlers in the paddock, Prosecco was doing everything wrong in the preliminaries. She was constantly bucking and kicking out, was loud, and looked extremely flustered by her first racecourse experience. Despite this, I thought she shaped with plenty of encouragement having been slowly into stride, running green throughout, and still finishing a four length fourth to what I believe will end up being a Group class filly (Bridestones). She was running on a slower part of the track and was looked after by Ryan Moore. Balding trained the dam (Elbereth) who improved once tackling middle distances and she needed patience and time, and Prosecco looks set to be a similar project in the making. Once she strengthens up I can see having a productive campaign over longer distances and given her owners, I would expect her to make up into a very smart performer.

SEIZE THE MOMENT

I touched on **EMBRACE** earlier and I'd like to talk up her credentials too. She is in the care of Owen Burrows, who does extremely well with a small string. She shaped well on her debut before scooting up at Wolverhampton (Ceanna 6th) on her second start. I loved her turn of foot that day as she won going away by a wide margin. She hasn't been given a mark as yet by the handicapper, but is one to certainly bear in mind as she strengthens up. I can see her going through the grades and is one to follow in 2023.

A DANISH FAIRYTALE

Aidan O'Brien has an embarrassment of riches at his disposal, but one of the three-year-olds that might have gone under the Ballydoyle radar is **HANS ANDERSEN**.

The son of Frankel raced four times as a two-year-old and was beaten in three of those contests. He did beat one of the top Irish juveniles (Al Riffa) in a Curragh Maiden, before that rival reversed the form in the Group 1 National Stakes at the same venue. Hans Andersen has all the expected big race entries and I always felt he would make a much better three-year-old once he matured mentally, as much as physically. He was ridden from the front last campaign, but I wouldn't be surprised to see a change of tactics in the spring. If you look at the record books in recent years there is also a growing trend of O'Brien horses that looked exposed as a two-year-olds going on to win Group Ones and Classics at three. A shining example of this was the filly, Snowfall. She recorded just one victory in the seven she ran as a juvenile. Her improvement at three was vast. Hans Andersen might be just the type to progress.

AINTREE FESTIVAL ONLINE PREVIEWS

NMRC supporter Jonathan Evans will be recording online previews for the Aintree Festival.

You will be able to watch them via the NMRC Facebook pages or by searching <https://youtube.com/channel/UCwhuxCizAZmXRGb5HG47AUw> or The Cheltenham Exchange.

The You Tube recordings are usually 30-60 minutes long and you will also find older previews covering this year's Cheltenham Festival as well on the Cheltenham Exchange website.

PREVIEW NIGHT PANEL PICKS – WELL DONE GUYS!

Just a reminder that our panel this year comprised of Andy Gibson (AG), Paul Ferguson (PF) and Gordon Armistead (GA). Most made selections in just the Championship Races with only selected other tips given.

The highlights on Day 1 of Cheltenham were as follows: In the 'Supreme' PF found the winner Marine Nationale (9/2) whilst GA gave Diverge (3rd 25/1) as an e/w selection. In the Arkle both PF & AG gave the 11/10 winner El Fabiolo. In the Champion Hurdle all found it difficult to take on Constitution Hill with PF recommending a 6 lengths+ margin to obtain better value (which paid off). AG also seeking a value alternative was keen on State Man e/w if 4/1+ available, albeit SP was only 7/2. In the Mares Hurdle GA found the 9/4 winner Honeysuckle whilst PF was keen on Love Envoi e/w (2nd 11/1) and AG was siding with Echoes in Rain e/w (4th at 9/1 with my bookie paying 4 places!)

On Day 2 PF got followers off to a good start in the Ballymore with Impaire Et Passe winning at 5/2 with GA suggesting Champ Kiely (3rd 13/2) in the same race. In the Brown Advisory, GA was spot on with 8/1 winner The Real Whacker. In the Coral Cup AG gave winner Langer Dan (9/1) as his e/w nap of the week and also highlighted how well treated Comprond was this year (3rd at 20/1) having been run recently over shorter trips seemingly to get his rating down in time for this race! In the QM Chase the rain arrived in time to confirm PF's selection Energumene (1st at 6/5).

Day 3 saw PF's pick for the Brown Advisory (Stage Star) running in the Turner's Chase instead and that switch paid dividends winning at odds of 15/2. In the Pertemps Final GA gave his e/w nap of the week as Good Time Jonny and was rewarded at odds of 9/1. Next up was the Ryanair Chase and GA followed up with Envoi Allen at 13/2 (although his suggested bet was e/w without the favourite). Onto the Stayers Hurdle and GA again fared best with Dashel Drasher just run out of it close home at 40/1 (was 80/1 just before the off when I backed it!) albeit (rather harshly) demoted to 3rd place I the stewards room.

Onto Day 4. All started well in the Triumph Hurdle with PF selecting 11/8 winner Lossiemouth with AG also advising the same selection in forecasts. AG had selected Sharjah in whichever race he turned up in so a 4th place in the County Hurdle at 10/1 will not be too disappointing for him. In the Gold Cup PF & GA were with the winner Galopin Des Champs with GA also having e/w success with Protektorat at 25/1 (providing your bookie paid 5 places like mine!)

At the end of the meeting the panel selected four 'lays of the week' with all four failing to win and hopefully saving the audience some cash to play with on other selections! For the record they were: Lucia, Facile Vega, Jonbon & Shishkin. They also each picked an e/w nap with Good Time Jonny & Langer Dan winning at 9/1 with Pembroke flopping on the last day – nonetheless if backed in doubles/trebles a healthy return would have been seen!

The event also raised £235 for the Injured Jockeys Fund – thanks to all who came along!

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