

Racin'



Issue 365

October/November 2020

Paul Jones is under the spotlight with Brian Goodwill this time – see full interview on P.11



MORE ZOOMERS REQUIRED!

Thanks to those who have registered so far. At present we will have enough to start with a monthly quiz night event in early November and will message those registered nearer the time with the details.

It is almost certain that our AGM in January 2021 will be held via zoom and that should give more members the chance to become involved given that our usual location is in Warrington and the AGM can now attract a wider geographical audience.

Further ahead, unless there is a speedy opening up of attending events and reduced social distancing (which seems unlikely) it is looking increasingly likely that our preview events in early 2021 will have to be held via zoom. However, we shall need more members signing up to make this viable.

If you have a desktop, laptop, tablet or smart phone you should be able to join in if you download the zoom programme. Initially the quiz sessions will be free although if preview events are held next year an access charge may be required.

If you are interested in joining in any of these zoom meetings or quizzes please register your interest via e mail to info@northernracingclub.com

You will then be advised in advance when the zoom sessions are being held and sent an invitation to join (with a link) in which you can either accept or reject.

Details of upcoming zoom sessions will also be listed on the club website, club Facebook and club Twitter pages.

If this method of bringing together members is well supported, we shall be looking to extend beyond 2021 in addition to any other 'outside' meetings that we may be able to hold.

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COMPETITION NEWS & RESULTS

HERITAGE HANDICAPS CHALLENGE 2020

59's DRAW RESULTS UPDATE

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

Sept 5th - 32 – Rob McDermott (Cheadle Hulme)

October 3rd – 02 – Ted Halewood (Merseyside)

All win the usual £50pm prize. 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.

NATIONAL HUNT – SATURDAY NAPS CHALLENGE 2020-21

With the Racing Calendar for the rest of 2020 and early 2021 far from guaranteed it will not be as easy to run over 20 weeks with four rounds (as in the past) and a definite finishing date.

In addition, with racecourses still closed to the public, our usual racecourse 'sponsors prizes' are not likely to be available.

So, to keep things simple this winter there will just be a seasonal competition starting on Saturday November 28th (Ladbroke's Trophy Day) and finishing on Saturday April 10th (Grand National Day 2021). There will be no competition on Dec 26th (Boxing Day) so if all goes to plan, we shall have 19 weeks of entries.

Depending on the number of entries there will be prizes for the first six places and possibly some spot prizes such as the leader at half way, longest priced winner, wooden spoon etc.

For full entry details please see page 3.

With 17 weeks gone in this year's competition the leaders so far are as set out below.

147.2	Dave Bates
128.2	Diane Bates
115.35	Helen Goodwill
98	Steven Purdy
97.5	Maureen Dawson
92.2	Dave Clutterbuck
87.2	Harold Woodward
83.25	Alan Hill
80.5	Alan Preston
78.15	Frank Turley
75.1	John Boswell
71.8	Rob McDermott
71	Harry Sandland
69.6	Jim Flanagan
66.3	David Fox
66.1	Ray Squire
65.05	Colin Stanton
63.75	Sam Doyle
63.5	Barbara Doyle
63.4	Brendan O'Meara

2020/21 NATIONAL HUNT SEASON 'SATNAPS' CHALLENGE

This winter's tipping challenge will be run over 19 Saturdays covering the main jumps season in the UK and finishing on Grand National Day in 2021.

This means that we shall be starting on 28th November this year with big jumps meeting at Newbury that weekend. Final date is 10th April (with Dec 26th being a void Saturday).

Due to the coronavirus issues affecting racecourses still we shall have a reduced prize fund this winter.

So, the plan this season is to run just a seasonal challenge but with prizes for the top six entrants and possibly some extra 'spot prizes' – all dependent upon the number of entrants.

Entry fees are still £10. There may only be one entry per member for this competition although spouses/partners of members may also enter. If paying by cheque please make payable to 'North & Midlands Racing Club'.

Members can also enter 'online' by e mailing info@northernracingclub.com and sending your entry fee via direct bank payment (bank details supplied after e mails received).

The aim of the competition is quite simple – select your nap each Saturday and if it wins your points are based on the starting price declared plus your £1 stake. Although, to add another judgement factor, you can also take 'Tote Prices' rather than starting prices when making your selections if you think they will be better.

For those entrants who are unavailable some weekends, the rules allow entrants to roll over selections to another Saturday with a maximum of three selections in any week.

Weekly selections can be registered by phone, text or e mail. This year the deadline for all methods of entry will again be strictly enforced as 1pm, or for races that start before then at least 15 minutes before the race start time. This rule is to ensure all entrants are able to enter on a 'level playing field'.

Full rules will be supplied to entrants in due course – for postal entries please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you would like a copy of the rules posting out. The entry form below can also be used.

✂.....

SATURDAY NAPS NATIONAL HUNT CHALLENGE (2020-21) ENTRY FORM

Please enter me in this winter's tipping competition. My £10 entry fee

(payable to North & Midlands Racing Club) is enclosed.

I do/do not require a copy of the rules posting out (sae required). Full rules also available on club website.

As score updates are provided weekly via e mail, an e mail address is preferred. Scores also in club magazine.

NAME(S).....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE..... E MAIL.....

Happy at the Valley!

By Michael Wheeler

September welcomed back horse racing to Hong Kong for the 2020-21 season, after it's summer break from mid-July. In the early stages of lock down the racing here was a lifesaver for me and I've followed it ever since.

The attraction of Hong Kong racing is that it features high quality, ultra-competitive races run mainly on turf. It's easy enough to pick up, with only two courses and a relatively small pool of horses, trainers and jockeys to familiarize. There's also a sizeable contingent of ex-British and Irish horses to add further interest.

Racing has been going officially in Hong Kong since 1884; it was introduced through British colonial rule in the 1840s and now it's very much the main game in town. Racing is so important to life here, that when the city's sovereignty was about to be returned to China in 1997, the Chinese leader reassured Hong Kongers that 'the horses will still run'.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club operates racing at Happy Valley and Sha Tin, with meetings alternating between the two courses every week throughout the year, apart from the summer break.

First built in 1845, Happy Valley is much the older of the two; nestled amid the skyscrapers of Hong Kong island, it hosts night racing on Wednesdays. This is a better time slot for the UK punter with the meetings starting late morning our time, seven hours behind. Happy Valley is a tight, right-handed turf track and it often pays to race prominently here, particularly over 6f where bagging the rail from a low draw can be a significant advantage. Zac Purton, an Australian jockey, is the course specialist who's able to conjure winners from even the widest of draws.

Sha Tin located in the New Territories is comparatively modern, having been built from reclaimed land in 1978. Sha Tin is also right-handed, but with both turf and all weather surfaces it's larger than Happy Valley and much more of a galloping track. It hosts a number of group one races and its most prestigious meeting is champions day in April, which attracts world class fields. Racing at Sha Tin takes place at the weekend, usually on Sunday afternoons which isn't so convenient for the British viewer unless you're an early bird. Meetings usually start around 6 am GMT so I tend to watch the later races!

Last season's jockey championship was a titanic ten-month tussle between the two principal riders, Zac Purton and Joao Moreira, that went down to the wire. Purton clinched the title at the penultimate meeting with Moreira suspended for the finale. This season Karis Teeton has made a good start and bids to break into the duopoly of the big two.

All the meetings are televised on Sky Sports Racing and delivered very professionally by the local media team, including expert paddock comments by Jenny Chapman aka 'Jenny from the paddock'. I'd like to see British broadcasters include more of this. There's a wealth of information on the Hong Kong Jockey Club website (hkjc.com) and the English language newspaper, South China Morning Post (scmp.com) has in depth reports and analysis.

At home the main trade papers/sites all provide coverage; Tim Carroll gives the most detailed tips and analysis on attheraces.com.

Jack Berry centre 'fantastic' says Paul

BY HAROLD HEYS

EVERY race fall looks nasty, and Paul Hanagan's tumble in the second last race at Newcastle's all-weather track on a chilly Saturday night in mid-February certainly looked awful. He was taken to hospital but was in good spirits and was able to move. It was the following day that doctors told him he had broken his back.

It could have been worse and he was told that he'd probably be able to get back in the saddle though it would take a long time and a lot of hard work. The next four months was a nightmare, but by mid-June he was showing up every day at the Jack Berry rehab centre at Malton, just down the road from his home. Two months later he was well enough to race again, just in time for the York Ebor meeting.

As every racing fan knows, popular Paul, a Warrington lad, was firmly back in the big time at the end of September when he coasted home in the Cambridgeshire aboard five-lengths winner Majestic Dawn, a 40-1 shot. (see photo below).

It wasn't such a shock to shrewd punters. He'd had a few problems last season and hadn't run for nearly a year when he had an outing at Kempton. He came last but it put him straight for the big race.

Paul was emotional after the win and as well as thanking all the team behind the winner and his family he made a special point of thanking the staff at the Jack Berry centre. They'd been fantastic, he said.

The former champion jockey, now 40 years old, has had a steady trickle of winners since his comeback and now needs fewer than 20 to reach the 2,000 mark

The Northern Racing Club have long been supporters of the rehab centre and many members were disappointed when we had to cancel a planned visit there in the summer because of the virus outbreak.

Hopefully, we can reorganise it again in the spring or early summer next year.



WHAT I DID DURING LOCKDOWN

BY ANDY GIBSON

This year has been unprecedented and challenging with the coronavirus pandemic casting its shadow on all aspects of our lives. However, from a purely selfish point of view I would never have had the time to write my first book without the enforced lockdown.

The book is a reflection on the 2019/2020 National Hunt season as viewed by subscribers to my website **thecheltenhamtrail.com**

Aside from in depth previews and reviews of most of the major races throughout the winter, I have also included a few personal stories plus a recurring theme of 'Theories, Strategies and Other Ideas' at the beginning of each chapter.

Here is a short excerpt from my book, **The Cheltenham Trail 2020 – A Modern Form Book**:

Whenever I am asked which race I would like to win more than any other as an owner, I always reply that the Gold Cup is the most important race to me. Sometimes I do not take, or acquire, the opportunity to explain further that it is not the Cheltenham Gold Cup I am referring to but the Zetland Gold Cup, which is run at Redcar in late May or early June. This race will always be closest to my heart as I competed with my dad to try and find the winner of the Zetland Gold Cup from when Move Off won the race in 1976 and 1977.

A few weeks before my dad passed away, he was aware enough to watch his last Grand National in 2010. He was in Redcar Hospice by then, which is poignantly just a couple of hundred yards away from Roseberry Square. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer around 2005, which I think was about the same time as JP McManus had been experiencing some problems with his prostate. (Apologies to JP if I have remembered this wrongly). We mentioned the big Irish owner often in our conversations and I know my dad always hoped JP was faring better than he was himself.

Back to the day of the big race and the nurse in the hospice approached my dad with a scruffy little paper bag and asked him to pick a piece of paper out of it. This was, of course, the hospice's Grand National sweep and my dad rummaged around and came out with number six – Don't Push It – owned by JP McManus!

The following day I was sat on the end of my dad's bed when the nurse came round with his prize, which was the grand sum of £25 placed in an envelope. As he took the notes out of the envelope he had a big grin on his face. He looked at me, winked and said "I can still pick 'em son."

Alongside working on the book, I have also had the opportunity to co- create the '**Cheltenham Trail and Cleeve Racing Club**'.

A few years ago, I approached Micky Hammond with an idea on how to recruit higher class horses into the yard. Micky was really keen on the idea; however, the appropriate platform for the Club was only formed after teaming up with Cleeve Racing. Our Club members pay no training fees for the full two years of the lifespan of the Club which allows us to focus our monies on buying better quality horses. Micky then takes a higher percentage of the prize money plus a small percentage when our horses are sold at the end of the two years. This might open the door for a few other syndicates to be run in a similar way given the current financial climate.

We have built up a really good group of people and it has been a joy to be involved. I have paid my membership along with the other two directors and there is no intention of the three of us making a

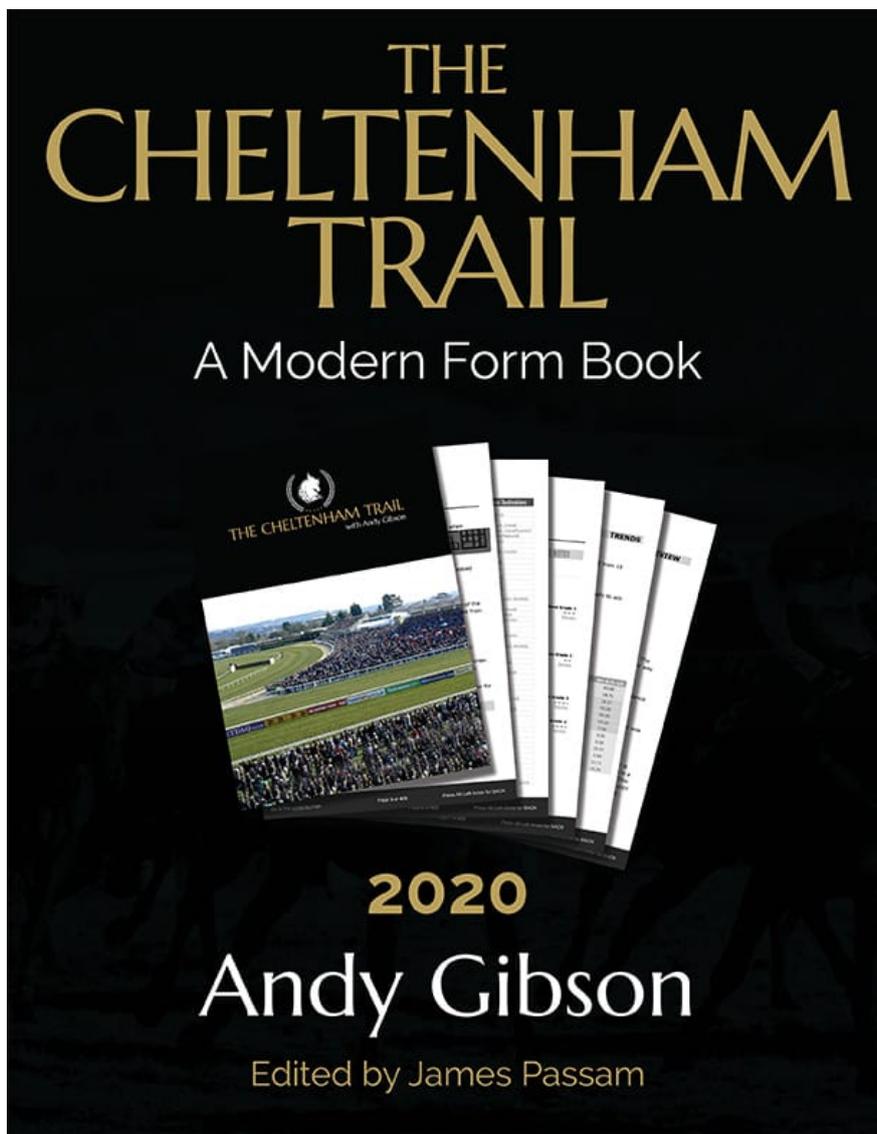
profit at the end of the two years. However, the fact we are not paying training fees will give a better chance of the whole group receiving a healthier pay out in 2022.

The first horse we bought was **Kayf Adventure** from the Philip Hobbs yard. We paid 20k for him and intend aiming him at the Veteran Chase Series from 2021. Prior to that, he will have a prep run before heading for the Rehearsal Chase at Newcastle. This will hopefully inform us very clearly either way as to the extent of his stamina for three miles. At least this is the current plan!

We went to the Doncaster sales on 15th September in search of a flagship horse for our group. We were looking for a graded quality horse and/or one we could aim at a festival handicap or two. Cleeve Racing made a video of what turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable day.

Use the link below to see how we got on:

<https://youtu.be/-2EcCijP0gs>



Editor's Note: The book will be on sale for £30 plus £3.95 P and P in the UK. Visit <https://thecheltenhamtrail.co.uk/> for contact details to enquire about the book, the Cheltenham Trail membership or the new ownership group.

GORDON ARMISTEAD'S RACING DIARY

(FROM BEHIND THE TV SET AT PRESENT)

Only two meetings really count in August. York and the month-long French holiday in Deauville.

Deauville

At this meeting the main La Touques course in Deauville holds nineteen days racing while less than a mile and a half away Clairefontaine hosts eleven days. This year it started on July 28th ending on August 30th with Five Group 1's six Group 2's and 10 Group 3's topping out the race cards with all the main races being held on the weekends.

Weekend 1

The first Group 1 of the month was the Prix Rothschild for fillies over a mile. Last year's Coronation Stakes winner Watch Me accounted for rivals who were trying for some soft Group 1 black type which a couple of them achieved. Second favourite Speak of the Devil again let the French Guineas form down back in fourth. Raabihah the first local home in the Prix Diane easily took the Group 3 ten-furlong Prix de Psyche from a couple of listed winners but didn't have to step up to do so.

Weekend 2

The Jockey Club form was made to look solid with fifth home Port Guillaume taking the Group 2 twelve-and-a-half-furlong Prix Hocquart. The sixth horse at Chantilly Pac Alto would have finished second here if Maxime Guyon hadn't managed to get himself hampered just as he began his run. Godolphin's Volkan Star was easily seen off in fifth.

Last year's Middle Park winner Earthlight was just odds against stepping back up to Group 1 level in the Prix Maurice de Gue. He ran almost to the pound with Golden Horde from Middle Park but they were only good enough for fourth and fifth. Winner Space Blues needed all of the six and a half furlongs as he dropped back from seven and has stepped up this season. Hello Youmzain stepped back up from a slightly below par run at Newmarket for second and Lope Y Fernandez in third was beaten about the same as he was by Pinatubo on his last run. They are all solid performers without being superstars. Earthlight might do better upped in trip.

Weekend 3

The first three in the Jockey Club met in the Group 2 ten-furlong Prix Guillaume and finished in the same order. This time they were on heavy and went right around the outside of the track and Mishriff won easier than at Chantilly. The Summit ran a solid race (has since been sold to go to Hong Kong) but Victor Ludorum pulled at bit hard and again failed to get home or maybe he just hasn't the heart for a battle.

The heavy ground from the Saturday had turned into bottomless for the one-mile Group 1 Jacques le Marois on Sunday. None of the runners looked enamoured with it but having been ridden a fair way out Palace Pier ploughed on to take the win from Alpine Star who was ridden just after halfway. The rest really didn't handle it even those with wins on official heavy and I wouldn't take this form strictly at face value on good ground.

Weekend 4

For the last two Group 1's of the meeting the ground had dried out a bit but was still on the soft side. The Prix Morny saw three Royal Ascot winners with the American trained Campanelle making all and pulling clear close home for a comfortable win. I imagine she might be back over for the Cheveley Park as she seems to have no trouble with the travel. Nando Parrado showed his 150/1 win at Ascot was no fluke and it was a big step up from a Haydock maiden for third home Rhythm Master. There appeared no excuse for the third Ascot winner Tactical. Nazeef seemed to have been found another winnable Group 1 in the ten-furlong Prix Jean Romanet but she was well beaten. It was hard to fancy winner Audarya who was coming here after winning a handicap at Newcastle off a rating of 99 and most to the field were basically no better than listed class.

The Diane form was again showed to be solid as sixth home Ebaiyra scored at Group 2 level in the Prix de Pomme upped to a mile and a half. Runner up Spirit of Appin has multiple listed places and a solid rating of 104 so as with Raabihah earlier in the meeting Ebaiyra didn't have to improve to take this.

The one good French filly that missed the Diane Tawkeel returned to action in the Group 2 mile and a quarter Prix de la Nonette making it five from five and on her win in the Prix St Alary in June she would be right in the mix for the Prix de l'Opera on Arc weekend but will probably be kept apart from stable/owner mate to Raabihah with the stable seeing that horse as the better animal.

Weekend 5

The final weekend has no Group 1 races with the main event being the Grand Prix de Deauville over twelve and a half furlongs. Telecaster has been mostly disappointing since winning the Dante last season after which

he started only 5/1 for the Derby. Here he made all and easily disposed of last year's first two Soft Light and Ziyad. Whether this means he is finally going to step up to Group 1's we will see.

York

Ghaiyyath has now proved he can take his racing and he never looked in danger in the Juddmonte International. It will be interesting to see if they keep him to ten furlongs or step him up the twelve for the Arc which will be another test against the small fields he has taken on this season. Magical ran her race again while Lord North will need another soft Group 1 to win again at this grade. Kameko didn't get home and his season has fallen apart a bit since the Guineas.

Perhaps in the Voltigeur we have finally found an unlucky horse in the Derby with Pyledriver who gave weight and a good beating to the first two home from the Gordon Stakes at Goodwood. This was a step up on his Royal Ascot win and he would be interesting in a Leger. He has a strange pedigree for a Leger candidate. The sire only raced at two winning a July Stakes and Richmond Stakes from three starts and the dam through a winner on the flat couldn't get out of her own way in four goes over hurdles for Philip Hobbs. Highland Chief and Mogul traded places from Goodwood but are now exposed as some way off Group 1 runners. Darain cost plenty but totally failed to step up.

Love toyed with the opposition in the Yorkshire Oaks and would appear to go to the Arc as the one to beat but it has to be said that the horses she beat at Newmarket and Epsom have hardly boosted her form and beating 97 rated Alpinista here was no more than light exercise. Third home One Voice must have run below her Nassau form and this may have come too quickly after a career best there. We have seen the best of Frankly Darling.

The final Group 1 at York saw Battaash having to dig deep to see off the fast-improving Que Amoro. Art Power never went a stride and there must have been something wrong.

Ireland

The first Group 1 for two-year olds the Phoenix Stakes at the Curragh saw an easy win for the Jessica Harrington runner Lucky Vega. It looked solid at this stage of the season but we will see how it works out. He should stay the seven assuming he comes back for the National Stakes.

Aidan O'Brien has any number of St Leger sorts and another emerged in Delphi who made it four from four this season in the St Leger trial at the Curragh. He is blinkered and has stepped up two furlongs after each win but keeps finding and just does enough. He probably needs to step up plenty to be Group 1 competitive but deserves a chance.

The Irish Derby looked a strange race at the time and the only winners to come out of it are three horses that have won their maidens. One horse withdrawn on the day with a stone bruise but has since gone on to take two wins very easily is Galileo Chrome. The second of those came in a listed race and he could be a very interesting candidate for the St Leger if connections want to step him up in class quickly.

September

Dream of Dreams' form went right downhill at the end of last season earning him a visit from the vet but it seems to have worked and he has turned three good efforts this season culminating in winning the Sprint Cup at Haydock. Quiet whether he should have been so short a favourite is open to debate but he won well.

Another six-year-old gelding Glen Shiel ran above himself having looked no better than a Group 3 runner.

Golden Horde has been beaten a length and a half in three Group 1's on the bounce and always seems to run his race. Art Power hasn't stepped up to this class while Hello Youmzain was just below his best.

All six runners in the Prix du Moulin were Group 1 winners but it was a strange old race to watch. Persian King won a poor French Guineas last season and then missed twelve months after finishing runner up in the Jockey Club. Apart from getting stuck in the mud at Deauville he has done nothing wrong since his return and won this well having tracked the leader and then gone on two furlongs out. I am not sure how Pinatubo merited being 7/5 favourite here and having been held up he looked well beaten before the turn in before running on without ever looking like catching the winner. Siskin never looked likely to be involved in the finish after getting upset before the race. French Guineas winner Victor Ludorum fell out of the stalls for the third time in four runs and I am not sure he is the full shilling. He was perhaps lucky overseas challengers weren't allowed when he won his Guineas.

Doncaster

A second division field for the Doncaster Cup with Spanish Mission well beaten in the Goodwood Cup winning easily from mainly a bunch of good handicappers. It was too much for Revolver who had been a Mark Prescott special starting the season off just 5/7.

The first St Leger I went too was one of the best with dual Arc winner Alleged getting turned over by Dunfermline. Nothing anywhere near that class in this year's race but a good improving winner in Galileo Chrome. Unsold at €70K as a yearling he probably brought his breeder a fair bit more after winning his maiden in June for which Derby winner Serpentine started favourite. He obviously stays well and it will be interesting to see if connections see him as a cup horse next season. Runner up Berkshire Rocco has run his best races at this trip and he too will probably be asked to go further next season. Pyledriver will be going back in trip having hung as he tired. Santiago hasn't gone on since his Irish Derby win and reportedly heads to Melbourne where he has 8 stone 6 in the Cup. Hukum looked short enough in the betting and probably didn't get home. Cindit made in three from three in the Champagne Stakes but third home State of Rest has only average form in Ireland and was only beaten a length.

Irish Champions Weekend

The only race over this weekend that could be described as a makeweight is the sales race which might be valuable but had a horse beaten in a York Nursery in at 5/4 so was not much in the way of class.

Two Group 1's on day one at Leopardstown. The Matron Stakes had two classic winners in it but both were seen off by one of the big improvers of the season in Champers Elysees. Starting off winning in a handicap off 86 she has then gone listed. Group 3 and now Group 1 to provide the highlight of what has been an excellent season for trainer Johnny Murtagh. Irish Guineas winner Peaceful followed her home again beating Fancy Blue at this trip. We know Fancy Blue is better at ten furlongs and the same probably applies to Peaceful. Albigna started favourite for the Guineas back in June when the ground was given as an excuse but she has now been shown to be not good enough and came home fifth here.

Ballydoyle was determined not to give Ghaiyyath an easy time of it in front in the rematch from York with Magical and she sat just on his quarters and she just out battled him over the last furlong and a half. They went very hard early on and Armory in third who had looked exposed below Group 1 class was closing in the last half furlong. Japan again underperformed and is running out of excuses.

Tiger Moth became the first runner from the Irish Derby to take a Group race when taking the Group 3 over a mile and a half easily. This was only his fourth run and he looks the sort to do well next season but he may head to Australia where he is in the Melbourne Cup but he looks a bit inexperienced for that.

The two-year olds are beginning to sort themselves out and Cadillac made it two from three in the Mile Group 2. He didn't seem to like the very soft ground at the Curragh and the runner up here is now 0 from 4 but he looks promising.

The two-year olds have centre stage on day two at the Curragh. Shale and Pretty Gorgeous were meeting for the third time when filling the first two places in the Moyglare Stakes. They look the best around at the moment and both have already won at a mile.

The National Stakes was a messy race but Thunder Moon once he got out of the pocket he had been trapped in showed a great turn of pace in the last half furlong. While the form of the two Ballydoyle runners Wembley and St Mark's Basilica who finished second and third is nothing special the winner was impressive and he should stay middle distances next season. The Ballydoyle number one string Battleground was an absentee coughing and Aidan will be hoping he comes back and some of the unraced ones from the yard are better than those which have run. Favourite Lucky Vega never did get out of the pocket he was in and his run is easily ignored.

With Battaash not travelling for the Flying Five Glass Slippers who had chased him at Goodwood took her second Group 1. Those that had chased Battaash at York Que Amoro and A'Ali both ran very poorly.

With so many horses to choose from in the Irish St Leger Aidan O'Brien relied on last year's Irish Derby winner Sovereign and the seemingly well exposed filly Passion. Both were well beaten. It must be doubtful if we will see Sovereign again he probably hasn't done enough to earn a place at Coolmore stud even as a jump's stallion. Winner Search for a Song followed up from last year in a totally different fashion coming from well off the pace. It wasn't as good a race this year but plans seem to be to try for the hat trick next year.

Dropping back to ten furlongs Cayenne Pepper returned to winning form in good style in the Group 2 Blandford Stakes. She will evidently head to the U.S. for her end of season targets. One Voice turned in another poor effort.

Longchamp Trials Day

With no signs of getting back on course here I was very close to booking a flight to Paris to take in this meeting and three others but decided against just before France was added to the quarantine list.

Usually held on Bastille Day the Grand Prix de Paris was transferred this year to replace the Prix Neil. It marked the return of Derby winner Serpentine but after making all there he was hardly ridden to advantage

here and we will need to see him again. His stable mate Mogul after running to about the same level at Epsom, Goodwood, and York appeared to find a turn of foot from somewhere to shoot clear a furlong out and win cosily. Runner up In Swoop winner of the German Derby is probably a real stayer for next season. Highland Chief and English King again tried to step up to Group 1 but were again found out. It was surprising that Prix du Jockey Club fifth Port Guillaume started favourite but he should have run better than finishing last and his new owners will hope he does better in Australia.

Raabihah may be the best three-year-old filly in France but she was found out in the Prix Diane and despite trainer Jean-Claude Rouget talking her up she again came up short in the Prix Vermeille. An hour after Cayenne Pepper won at the Curragh the horse that beat her in the Give Thanks Stakes at Cork Tarnawa ran out a clear winner. Apart from not going in the mud at Ascot last October she has been very consistent since last year's Oaks and might be an interesting runner in the Arc without being good enough. Irish Oaks winner Even So returning from a break pulled a bit too much and was well beaten.

Stradivarius was surprisingly odds on for the Prix Foy but in a typically slowly run French race he was outpaced by last year's Derby winner Anthony Van Dyke who had of course beaten him over this trip earlier in the season. The winner is another evidently off to Australia and while a faster pace might suit Stradivarius in the Arc I can't see him being good enough.

Final Weekend

The last weekend of the month was nearly all about the two-year olds. In the Rockfel Stakes it was surprising to see Monday so short in the betting as her win in a listed race at Leopardstown was nothing special. She was well beaten as Isabella Giles took her second Group race. The second and third are only rated in the 80's so it looked very ordinary form. I assume that Colin Griffin made a nice profit on the £7,500 he paid for Cheveley Park favourite Miss Amulet as a yearling when she changed hands after the Lowther. She just found Alcohol Free too good and might have been below her York form. We didn't see the 1000 Guineas winner here.

Likewise, the Middle Park will have no bearing on the 2000 Guineas as Supremacy will be a sprinter. He was the forty first win of the season for progeny of first season stallion Mehmas. Runner up Lucky Vega probably ran up to this form beating The Lir Jet by just about the same distance as he had at the Curragh. The Royal Lodge winner New Mandate is a gelding so certainly won't be in the classics.

At the Curragh there was a remarkable effort from High Definition in the Group 2 Beresford Stakes. There aren't too many races on the round mile course here but from an outside draw Seamie Heffernan settled him in last of the thirteen. Still at the back and ridden three out he was pulled to the outside and made some headway but was still five lengths down inside the last furlong and still ended up winning cosily. It's hard to judge off T.V. but he looks a very big beast so you imagine he will improve at three and has been installed at Derby favourite. That might be just because something has to be. His full brother Royal Aide won a three-mile maiden hurdle at Sligo in August.

RACING SPOTLIGHT ON PAUL JONES

By BRIAN GOODWILL

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN RACING NOW?

I have just marked the fifth anniversary of launching pauljoneshorseracing.com and continue to supply attheraces.com with trends for over 150 races throughout the year. I also wrote and self-published a betting theories and philosophies book 2½ years ago called *From Soba To Moldova* (odd name I know but you'll have to read it to find out why!) which was well received and I still get orders now and again. That was mainly written as a promotional tool for the website but offers readers my ideas about how to go making a profit on betting on racing and other sports, written in a light-hearted but un-preaching style.

The website has gone much better than I imagined and is a mix of racing content, which I write, and sporting content where I enlist the assistance of experts in their various fields which acts as informative, betting-related material to fill the gaps in between the racing. Overall, members seem very happy as on average we have an annual return rate of approximately 90%. It is not a tipping site as such, although we do give recommendations, but I prefer to see it as a form of analysis from which you can take views to add to your own, as you might if reading the racing press. That's the way my long-term members like it back from the days

when I offered racing-only analysis through Weatherbys off the back of writing *The Cheltenham Festival Betting Guide* for the first 16 years, so I saw no need to rock the boat and continue giving them what they want when I launched the website in the autumn of 2015. Recommending Rule The World ante-post at 50/1 for the Grand National and Wings Of Eagles at 40/1 for the Derby would be the racing highlights.

YOU TIPPED UP SERPENTINE FOR THE DERBY. HOW DID YOU REACH THAT CONCLUSION AND WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE RACE?

With two of the three market leaders historically drawn badly in stalls 1 and 2 (English King and Mogul) and the other looking a highly unlikely stayer (Kameko), I was on the lookout for a guaranteed stayer on breeding at a tidy price and landed on Serpentine hailing from the best stable in the world, by the best sire in the world and arriving off the back of a 9 lengths' win in first-time cheekpieces which improved him no end which were retained for the Derby so, in retrospect, how on earth was he sent off at 25/1!? His dam was second in the Oaks and a three-parts sister to an Arc winner, so there has to be more to come too being raised up to 1m4f for the first time.

Naturally I thought it was great watching the race! Often in the Derby something at a big price goes clear and looks for a fleeting moment that it might hang on but that really did look the case with Serpentine as far out as rounding Tattenham Corner as there were no stamina question marks with him beforehand, in fact Aidan O'Brien had even commented in the lead up to the race that he was so stamina-laden he might be more of a St Leger horse. Obviously, Emmet McNamara played a blinder whilst it wasn't the finest day for many of his rival jockeys who clearly gave their mounts too much to do bearing that also the second and third filled the same places throughout at big odds. I'm hoping that Serpentine can prove himself to a good Derby winner later in his career rather than the race being remembered for a brilliant ride.

WHAT WOULD YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR BEST EVER BET? NOT NECESSARILY THE ONE YOU WON MOST MONEY ON.

I referred to this in *From Soba To Moldova*, so I'll copy and paste it from there if you don't mind.

I often like to bet in a market without a strong favourite if I have a fancy to beat the rest. An example of where I felt hard done by when 'betting without the favourite' was the 2017 BBC Sports Personality of the Year. Nine days before the ceremony I fancied Jonathan Rea to finish second to the heavy odds-on Anthony Joshua so recommended him at 12/1 to do so. Here was my thinking:

I think the value to finish in the first three is the first person to win three consecutive world superbikes championships, Jonathan Rea, who is top price 40/1 in the outright market and who was awarded an MBE earlier this year. Don't underestimate a fairly minor sport fully getting behind their man or woman given that this is a rare chance for them to vote for their sport. Even Charlotte Dujardin finished fourth representing dressage of all sports as the outsider of 12. When you add to that how important the provincial vote can be, and you would think that Northern Ireland will really get behind Rea, he looks the nominee most likely to cause a mild surprise by finishing in the first three.

The provincial vote was a big factor in Joe Calzaghe winning and Leigh Halfpenny finishing second for Wales and, although the racing community heavily got behind AP McCoy in 2010 after he won the Grand National, again underlining how a sport very rarely nominated then voting on mass can have a huge effect (Phil Taylor was second in the same year to further ram home the point), I also imagine so did the Northern Irish for AP vote seven years ago. Combine motorcycle fans being starved of not being able to vote for their sport in SPOTY for decades that are now desperate to have their say (the last was James Toseland in 2007 who outperformed his market position to finish fourth) and Northern Irish sports fans in general wanting to vote for their man, and I think Rea is good value in the Top 3 market at 5/2 but he could even sneak second place, so 12/1 without Anthony Joshua also appeals. This argument is underlined even more by the continuing decline in the number of people voting.

Come the night and I was a hoopin' and a hollerin' when Rea was announced as runner-up with AJ's name yet to be announced, only for Mo Farah then to be revealed as the winner! I was as shocked as Mo because he

must have given up hope having never even finished in the first three in the voting after the four occasions where he completed the 5,000m-10,000m gold medal double at major worldwide championships, whereas this year he failed in that same attempt and then won SPOTY! Granted, 2017 wasn't a classic year for British sport but what does that tell you about the Great British voting public?

I was gutted having felt that I'd got the thinking absolutely spot on. To make it worse, I'm convinced that Farah's kid playing up in the live interview helped win it for him as it was the one single piece of light relief in what was otherwise a staid, dull production of a show where only phone votes on the night counted. The winning margin was only around 3,000. One thing is for sure, if there is another candidate that has the same combination of a minority sport and is likely to pick up a loyal provincial vote, then I'm interested in having them on my side in some way.

WHAT RACING DAY STILL HAUNTS YOU?

Cheltenham Gold Cup day in 2014. I was on course and, unorganised, I filled out my Placepot five minutes before the first race, perming two horses in five races and banking on On The Fringe in the Foxhunters' to £1 lines so £32 in total. Once I reached the counter I realised that I only had £27 in cash on me. Rather than cutting it to 50p lines, I scrunched the ticket up and walked away so you can guess what is coming next! With outsiders led by Lord Windermere occupying the first three positions in the Gold Cup (I was on On His Own who got chinned) and the two clear favourites in the Albert Bartlett finishing out of the frame (I was the third, Apache Jack), the dividend paid £44,416.60 to £1 which was the highest of the year and which I would have had, or even £22,208.30 if I had changed my ticket to 50p lines would have been nice!. The two-hour journey home felt a lot longer.

HOW HAS LOCKDOWN BEEN FOR YOU?

Good and bad. The website ground to a near halt for two months, though I found enough things to write about from an ante-post perspective, and I missed going away as like to travel and go on European city breaks. On the plus side, I managed to lose a stone in weight cycling, which was great with no traffic on the roads and the best spring weather-wise for many a year and I suppose it's good to give your mind a rest and recharge the batteries, which I like to do after all the work over many months that I put into Cheltenham every year anyway. Though not for 2-3 months!

IS THE CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL YOUR FAVOURITE MEETING AND IS THERE ANYTHING THAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE IT?

It was until a few years into writing *The Cheltenham Festival Betting Guide* which then got rather popular so became quite big, quite quickly, after which I felt more pressure than enjoyment when putting it together and during the meeting itself. If results weren't going well on the track, I felt it, as I still do when I have an inevitable bad run now. After 16 years of writing it annually, I couldn't face embarking on a 17th edition even though I had set my goal as writing 20 editions before I walked away. Cheltenham still forms the most important and popular part of my website service as I start the weekly content on it from October so, once I retire and the pressure to find winners there is off again, I'd imagine it will return to being my favourite meeting. I've done ok though as since I started up a private Cheltenham service in 2009, members would be nicely in profit. A losing year still hurts though given the huge amount of time and effort that I put into it for four months.

I'm happy with four days but some races can go/be replaced (the Fred Winter taking away runners from the Triumph would be top) and there definitely shouldn't be a 2½m hurdle race. Only owners, trainers and jockeys want that so they can avoid each other all the more, plus fans who want to see six-runner Champion Hurdles.

I'm not against the Veteran's Final being moved from Sandown in January to the Festival (it can also act as a Grand National trial) or even seeing a Veterans' Gold Cup as long as it for 12-year-olds and older bearing in mind that we haven't had one of those win since 1969 so it wouldn't be taking much if anything away from the main event. That won't happen though with veterans over fences being aged 10+.

WHAT CAN THE BHA DO BETTER?

I'm not really one for racing politics but let's get the flat jockeys' championship back to being from the opening day of the turf season to the last rather than the Craven Meeting to Champions Day. Who actually buys into the British Champions Series? I am a racing journalist and I can't even tell you who won last season's divisions. Does anyone actually care? Okay, I think I'm fairly safe on saying Stradivarius won the stayers' section!

A FUNNY STORY YOU CAN RELATE FROM THE RACECOURSE

Searching for my car at Dingley point-to-point course for an hour in foul conditions after I couldn't remember when I parked the damn thing might amuse some but not me! I once mistakenly took Henry Daly for Cheltenham's Sponsorship Manager, Peter McNeile, a long time ago now at Ludlow and asked him if he was working today or just on a jolly. I got a rather strange look.

FREE COMPETITION ENTRIES FOR MEMBERS!

As members will know most of our competitions have an entry fee of £10. There is however a way to get free entries by helping the club raise funds via the easyfundraising scheme.

With more people now shopping online due to Covid-19 this is an ideal time to sign up for the scheme to support the club and for every £10 raised receive a free competition entry!

The concept is quite simple – firstly you set up an account with easyfundraising.

You can then either download a reminder to add to your PC toolbar or on mobiles use their app.

Each time you shop online check if the business you want to use is amongst the 4000+ covered by the scheme and if so the website/app will take you to their website where you complete your shopping etc in the usual way and when you pay a small percentage of what you spend will be passed to your fundraising scheme.

It's simple to use and costs you nothing but you can help support the club and if you spend enough online it won't be long before you raise enough to get your free competition entry!

Typically, a weekly supermarket shop might raise 50p whilst setting up a mobile phone contract can raise around £15. Please sign up at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/northracingclub/>



A LIFETIME AS A RACING JOURNALIST (PART 2)

BY FRED SHAWCROSS

I should reveal at this point that I am from a musical family. My parents were pianists, my dad a swing enthusiast and my mum classically trained. I have played drums ever since I was six years old, and was the drummer in my dad's band from my early teens, so I suppose it was inevitable that sooner or later my interests would clash.

It had become increasingly difficult for me to maintain the level of application I needed at Timeform, travelling to Halifax from Bolton after gigs, which were becoming increasingly regular and well paid.

So, for the first time, and now in my 40's, I became a professional musician by night and a racing enthusiast/punter by day. Unfettered by daytime labours, and well paid at night, I could get to local racecourses or the bookies. Heaven!

I had residencies at the Empress Club in Bolton, The Poco-a-Poco in Stockport, the Crystal Room at Park Hall (Charnock Richard) and Fagin's in Manchester. I also toured with Wilma Redding, Tony Monopoly, Jose Feliciano and 1970's pop group 'The Fantastics'.

In 1979 the band I led were approached by P&O/Princess Cruises to join their fleet as 'house' musicians with serious money on offer. The first ship we were offered was the Sun Princess (the original TV 'Love Boat') cruising the Caribbean. We didn't take long to sign contracts!

We were at sea until May 1982, seeing much of the planet, particularly Australia. During one cruise I met David Royle and his wife Susan. David had emigrated to Oz on a £10 assisted package and this bright, industrious Mancunian/Salfordian did very well over the years and owned a chain of shops on railway stations in New South Wales. He had a collection of classic cars at his property in Mount Riverview (not far from the Blue Mountains) and a string of racehorses trained and racing on tracks around Sydney.

Because I hate flying, David and Susan invited me to spend my month's shore leave at their home (rather than fly home) after one three-month spell at sea. During this stay I did shifts on the Sydney Morning Herald as a sub editor which allowed me to visit Randwick and Rosehill to watch the racing.

I grew very fond of Australia, and the people, whose attitude to life, and love of all sports (especially racing), mirrored mine almost exactly. So, when I was offered a permanency on the Sydney Morning Herald, I couldn't wait to tell Judith (my long-suffering but hugely supportive wife). However, this was one time when the lovely 'Jude' decided no way was she and our three daughters going to up sticks and live 13,000 miles away from Bolton. End of !!

My band decided to return to 'Blighty' in May 1982 and we found to our dismay that the cabaret clubs had all but gone and the well-paid work we had enjoyed in the previous decade had evaporated. Some took jobs at resorts in the Middle East while I called up some of the people I had known on National newspapers in the quest for casual work.

Again, I was lucky. Within days I was ping-pong around Manchester doing shifts for The People, Daily Star, Daily Mail and News of the World covering both news and sport. And it didn't take me long to immerse myself in racing as a punter.

Eventually I was offered a permanent job at the Daily Mail. Whilst I was grateful for full time employment, as opposed to casual shifts, I fretted because I was handling news not sport. I waited and hoped that the chance might come for me to get back into racing journalism. It came in autumn 1985. It was from a most unlikely source, a free sheet entrepreneur based in Stockport: Eddie Shah.

Word was spreading around Manchester that Eddie was going to take on the 'big boys' in London and beyond with the first computer driven daily newspaper in Britain. Its name was 'Today' and he was looking to recruit staff.

I compiled my CV, fired it off and waited. One among the usual tsunami of hopefuls. However, I reckoned not too many journalists with jobs on nationals would be queuing to join a new launch, given the opposition. However, Eddie was promising colour and reasoned that would give him an edge.

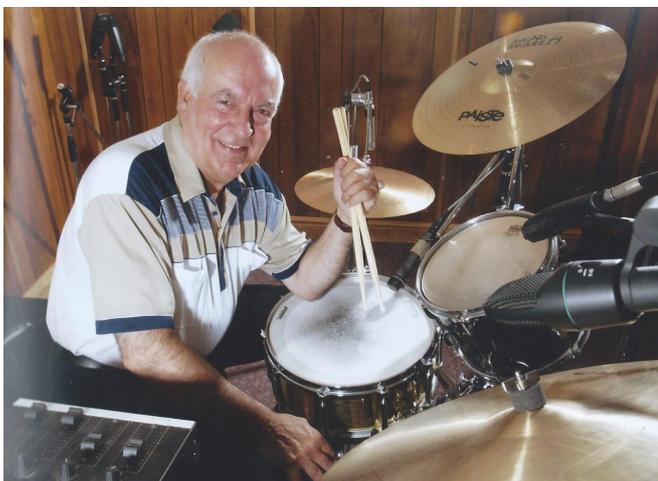
My CV must have resonated with someone because I was called to London to be interviewed by Len Gould (formerly Sports Editor of the Daily Express) and the first editor of Today, Brian MacArthur. I hadn't worked for or with Len Gould so it was a pleasant surprise that a short time afterwards I was advised that I had been selected to fill the position of racing columnist/editor for Today. I didn't realise until I turned up for work that I was flying solo. The staff of the racing desk numbered one. Me!

Looking back, those early days were madness. We worked long hours, had meals at the desk, and endured terrible stress when computer failures wiped our screens.

People talk about the 'Dunkirk spirit'. Well the staff at Today had that in spades. But we had a purpose. The 'snipers', and there were plenty of them, kept chuntering on about out of focus colour prints, early editions with 'old news' and the prospect of an early demise for Mr Shah's 'new venture' – especially as there were demonstrations regularly held by opponents to the computerised systems used whilst other papers still relied on type setters.

But we battled on, against the odds. We had an ace up our sleeves. The great Peter O'Sullivan was tipping for us. I got to speak to him every day, hoping that he wouldn't remind me of the day in the press box at Windsor when I accidentally trod on his foot after yelling home a winner I had napped for 'Captain Heath' He never mentioned it!

- In the final chapter of Fred's story, we learn about Fred's love of greyhound racing, his friendship with Steve Cauthen and much more! Pictures below show Fred on the drums and Eddy Shah launching 'Today'.



CLUB RACING SYNDICATES OVER THE YEARS (PART 3)

BY GORDON ARMISTEAD

Lynton Lad

Shouldn't really be included here as he never ran for us. Eric Alston had purchased Lynton Lad at Newmarket sales in October 1997 for 3,000 guineas and offered the club first refusal on him. We went up to see him and he looked a nice type. Having been a 90 rated two-year-old for Ed Dunlop he then joined Charlie Brookes where he had some placed efforts over the next three seasons but failed to stay when sent hurdling. He was registered with the club for just one week during which it was discovered he was not sound and Eric agreed to take him back. Eventually after nearly two years he came back to win twice and give his new owner Kim Jones some rides in amateur races including in the ladies' race on Diamond Day at Ascot.

Cee-N-K

Cee- N-K was a horse that certainly got to know his way around sales rings passing through them no less than seven times. Bred by Robert Sangster Swettenham Stud he was by Thatching while the dam who didn't make a place in three starts was a half-sister to Guineas winner High Top.

Sold as a foal for 16,000 guineas he failed to find a buyer as yearling when the bidding stopped at £7,500 Irish before being bought for 12,500 guineas at the two-year-old breeze up sales by Mark Johnston .He won twice for Johnston- as a two-year-old in a handicap at Lingfield and at three in a handicap a Beverley off a rating of 69.

A few weeks after Lynton Lad had gone wrong Eric claimed Cee-N-K for £5,000 out of a seller for the club. Some horses thrive after leaving a big yard for a smaller one but some have had been trained hard and have had enough and Cee-N-K was in the latter group. New colours again with the stripped sleeves being replaced with blue ones with a yellow armband. You could just about forgive his seventeenth of eighteen on his second run when slightly hampered at Catterick. At Beverley on his next outing he jumped off last and only passed one horse to again finish seventeenth of eighteen. He managed to lead his side of the track for a while at Doncaster but still finish twentieth. Chester in July was no better but it was interesting after the race. It was for apprentices and waiting for the horse to come back in and see what the jockey had to say we were surprised when he came back without jockey Shane Copp and saddle less. After a brief chat Eric went to look for the jockey but he had already left the course without a word to anyone. Not surprisingly with this level of professionalism Mr Copp failed to make it as a jockey.

Next time out he picked up his one piece of prize money with a third of four runners at Newcastle but it was back to being down the field at Haydock August where jockey John Egan made some derogatory remarks about his attitude. Later on, that month he gave Melanie Worden, who was Hawwam's groom for most of his time at Eric's, a ride at Hamilton. It was without much hope we travelled up to Redcar in October for another poor effort and his rating had dropped from 70 to 42 during the season.

We had a meeting at the stable in October 1998 to discuss the future and while I was more than happy to wind things up but others wanted to persevere. That meant he went off to Doncaster sales where he was bought back for 1,400 guineas and that was the end of my involvement in racehorse ownership.

The new syndicate decided on a change of trainers first to David Nicholls and then Geraldine Rees. Seventh of twenty in a seller at Ripon was about his best effort in seven runs but by season's end he was down to a rating of 24 and he again went to Doncaster October sales where this time he made 1,800 guineas to a bid from Ginger McCain.

At the McCain's he had six runs over hurdles and three over fences in four different sets of silks including those of Beryl McCain (the Red Rum colours) and two stints in Gingers colours without showing anything. In July 2000 he was off to the sales again -this time Ascot and for 1,500 guineas he joined permit holder John Panvert's Devon stables.

Five more outings over hurdle where he failed to beat another horse and his racing career was over in October 2000 with a hurdle rating of just 52 His seventh and final trip to the sales came at Ascot in February 2001 selling as the property of Miss J Clark for £700. He died at the age of eight.

Judith Bradley sent this feedback to the latest chapter in Gordon's article:

Just read the latest Club magazine. I was particularly looking forward to reading Gordon Armistead's article on ownership, because I also had a share in The Dinger and Captain Caveman. I remember that dreadful day at Market Rasen when we lost The Dinger on her first attempt at racing. Gordon was kind enough to give me a lift to and from the races, as well as to and from the stable visits, and the drive home that day was sombre to say the least. We started again with fresh hope for Captain Caveman. I went down to Ludlow on the train and was so nervous that I spent most of the day in the (Porta)loo! Having been told to take care of him, the jockey took him on a gentle route around the outside, but he did well to finish sixth. I also was not present to witness his second behind Melottie. That day at Haydock, when he finished sixth behind future Grand National winner Miinnehoma on bottomless ground, was probably his best run and we all ran down from the stands to greet him after the race. His next race at Sedgefield was disappointing (we went to watch in the freezing cold!) but it turned out he had contracted Equine flu. We went up to Newcastle in March, but as Gordon reports, the horse was injured and after being sent to a specialist in Bristol he was retired, although he did run in some races later on, notably in the Heart of All England Hunter Chase at Hexham, when he was going well when he slipped up on the home turn.

Blade Of Fortune was one of the best named horses ever, in my opinion, being by Beldale Flutter out of Foil 'Em. However, although I signed up for a couple of other club horses, I did not continue with racehorse ownership after Caveman's retirement.

- Editor's Note – The **Hawwam** syndicate came before **Lynton Lad** but due to space restriction in this issue we have had to defer this part of the article until next time!

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