

Racin'

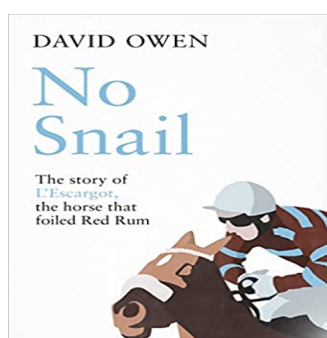


Issue 381

June-July 2023

MEMBERS SPECIAL OFFER

Author David Owen is offering NMRC members the chance to purchase this new book about the exploits of L'Escargot at £12 plus postage. That is £8 less than the cover price and £3.99 less than the Amazon price. Please order directly from David at davidowen58@netscape.net



Racecourse commentator **Alan Howes** is 'under the spotlight' in this edition of Racin' – see pages 11/12



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AINTREE GRAND NATIONAL SWEEPSTAKE RESULT

Thanks again to all who entered with Andy White and Phil Evans completing the draw online, on the eve of the race, using a random number generator. The prize fund was £215 with the winners as follows;

1st Mike Campbell £107.50

2nd John Boswell £53.75

3rd = Dave Edge/Frank Donohoe £16.12

4th Harold Heys £21.20

COMPETITION NEWS

59's DRAW RESULTS UPDATE

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

April 1st – 49 – Ted Halewood
May 6th – 07 – Brendan O'Meara

Your £50 prizes will be with you shortly.

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.

SATURDAY NAPS+ COMPETITION 2022/23

Congratulations to **John Boswell** who receives a £70 prize for winning Round 3 of this winter's competition. **Simon Clark** finished in 2nd place and wins a £30 prize.

In the seasonal competition **John Boswell** also held on to win the £150 1st prize with 2nd place prize of £90 going to **Terry Slocombe**, 3rd place prize of £45 was won by **Craig McConnachie** and the 4th place prize of £25 went to **Liz O'Donoghue**.

Thanks to all who took part – enjoy the summer and we shall be back in November to start all over again!

ALEX BIRD COMPETITION 2023

Congratulations to **Jon Moisey** who receives a £70 prize for winning the Aintree round in this year's competition. **Duane Marshall** finished in 2nd place and wins a £30 prize.

After two rounds **Helen Goodwill** remains in the lead with **Sam Doyle Jr** in second place.

We move onto Royal Ascot for Round 3 where the last four days of the meeting are covered by the competition.

HORSE WELFARE CAN STILL IMPROVE

As readers will be aware the 2023 Grand National was badly disrupted by animal rights protestors and was late starting with a similar protest now planned for the 2023 Epsom Derby.

The April events prompted Kevin Blake to start a 'stand up for racing' campaign to share positive news about the sport. This follows the expansion of stable open days in September each year to help project a positive image of the sport.

However, readers may also recall the initiative in 2013 called 'The Horse Comes First' bought into by all areas of the racing industry. However, less than 10 years on we have racecourse managers who think it's a good idea to set off fireworks before the Derby (as in 2022) or place a funfair next to the on-course stables (Windsor, May 2023).

This tells us that not all key racing personnel are 'on the same page' still and that further improvements are still required. Whilst the pink-shirt protestors will not be happy unless racing is banned (where do they think most of the horses would go, if not the abattoir, if they were successful?) other animal rights groups such as the RSPCA are more prepared to work with the sport to 'make it safer'.

The RSPCA uses David Muir as their racing consultant (ex-mounted police) and has helped frame many safety improvements in the last 20 years including: Safer hurdles/fences; Run-out areas on tracks; Better watering equipment; Tighter race entry controls; No re-mounting on fallers; Rubber (non-slip) walkways; Cool down areas; Improvements to horse ambulances.

Lydia Hislop recently called for further welfare improvements in her [Sporting Life article](#) and in this issue of Racin' Alan Howes also voices where he would like to see improvements made.

This is not 'giving in' to protestors but accepting that the world is changing and if the sport does not take heed of what is being said then the likely outcome will be even larger numbers of anti-racing protestors in the years to come.

The real question is 'does the sport have the required 'captain' to see the 'ice berg' ahead?'

POINT TO POINT NEWS WITH ANDY WHITE

Yorkshire Area

The Derwent Hunt meeting at Charm Park Scarborough on the first Sunday in May closed another successful season for the Yorkshire Area.

Top rider on the day was John Dawson with a double. He rode the odds-on favourites JUMBLE JURY for Jack Teal in the maiden and STEELY ADDITION for his brother Chris Dawson in the mixed open.

Will Easterby was successful on TOSHIBA in the maiden conditions race completing a double on the day for trainer Jack Teal. This win earned Will the award for the top rider at this year's two Charm Park meetings.

Randex Aintree Foxhunters

It was success for the well fancied FAMOUS CLERMONT ridden by Will Biddick for trainer Chris Barber in this year's renewal over the Aintree Fences. It was a first success in the race for Biddick who remains in the lead in this year's men's Point to Point Championship.

A good pace was set by last year's winner LATENIGHTPASS for the Gina Andrews / Tom Ellis team who were overtaken in the final stages to finish a credible fourth.

Second was BENNY'S KING ridden by John Dawson for Dan Skelton and third was 40-1 shot LOUGH DERG SPIRIT, the best of the Irish contingent.

Knutsford Races at Tabley

The second of the two meetings at Tabley was held on Sunday 21 May where there were 41 runners across the six races with many big priced winners as the favourites failed to deliver.

Two winners for Huw Edwards who rode STAR OF FRUITION in the opening 2 Mile 4 maiden for Ray Owen at 20-1 and on JEUX D'EAU 7-1 in the closing 3 Mile maiden for Laura Richardson.

Other winners on the day were shared around with Murray Dodd on WHAT A GLANCE in the mixed open, Tommie O'Brien on BUZZARD TRIX, Imi Robinson on URBANIST and Toby McCain-Mitchell on FOREST CHIMES in the three Conditions races.

Point to Point Championship

Going in to the final meetings of the season the leading riders in this year's pointing championship as at 14 May were :-

Gentleman's Championship - Will Biddick 49 wins ahead of Jack Andrews 39 and James King 28

Ladies Championship - Gina Andrews 31, well ahead of Izzy Marshall on 13 and leading novice rider Amber Jackson-Fennell on 11.

Leading Trainer - Tom Ellis on 67 Winners with Bradley Gibbs on 21 and Chris Barber on 18.

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 THE STABLE VISIT 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

TRISTAN DAVIDSON STABLE VISIT

The Monday date (May 22nd) chosen did not prove very popular with members so we shall try and find a better date to re-schedule this visit – probably in October/November now.

Whilst the **Mel Rowley** visit was well supported we do need a minimum number attending to make these visits viable so if you can support these events please do so otherwise we may have to reduce such events in future

BETTING TALES OF WOE BY CHARLES REAR

On May 19th 2023 Charles wrote in with this story – have you got a similar tale to share?

In Aintree's 2.5-mile handicap I'd backed Barton Knoll the evening before at 14/1, using my Skybet free £5. (horse is running in it again this year but age seems to be catching up with him)

In the 3-mile 1f handicap, I backed Indy Five on Betfair at various prices between 14 and 20s. Again, I'd staked around £5 - quite a big bet for me these days.

I followed both horses before but these were not sentimental bets. Indy Five looked set for an easy lead and could easily be forgiven his PU last time out.

Barton Knoll I was sure had been prepped for the race - conditions were right and he'd run very well in a hot 5-runner race last time out.

They were beaten and nose and a head, Both traded 1.01 in running. I've got the records to prove it! I've missed out narrowly on bigger pay outs but this was very painful.

How often has someone backed horses at double-figure prices and had this happen, on the same card?

It's a bit of a sob story but we all have them and it sometimes eases the pain to share it.

GORDON ARMISTEAD'S RACING DIARY

Thursday April 13th Aintree

Four grade 1's to set off a super day's racing.

Stage Star seemed to get the same easy lead in the Manifesto Novice Chase as he had at Cheltenham but couldn't go on at the end as he did there and was well below his form. Banbridge who missed the festival took the race nicely from Saint Roi who stepped up in trip. The winner can go three miles eventually but will need to improve to go on in open company. Saint Roi is below top class as he was over hurdles but there are plenty of races for him during the season in Ireland.

In the Anniversary Zenta upheld the Triumph Hurdle form in winning but didn't like being in front and made hard work of it. She will no doubt be held up longer next time. Runner up Bo Zenith was ahead just before the line and just after. He had looked just a stayer when he won at Haydock and while he will certainly improve for a trip he wasn't short of speed here. He looks more than a juvenile and could jump a fence in time.

Most of the rest will be handicapping in the future with the exception of Rightsotom who will still be a novice in the new season.

In the Bowl all the runners had question marks about how they would perform after Cheltenham. Conflated after his hard race there didn't perform while A Plus Tard in finishing a well beaten third here showed he is not the horse he was. He is only nine but it is four years since he won his first chase at the festival.

Ahoy Senor didn't jump as well as he did at Cheltenham before his fall with lots of niggly mistakes and the poor jump at the last gave Shishkin the opening for the win. There were a few times in the race where Shishkin didn't appear to be going well and some type of head gear might end up on him next season. He will no doubt be aimed at the Gold Cup but it is over twenty-five years since a ten-year-old won the race.

The Aintree Hurdle and my first look at Constitution Hill. He isn't anything special to look at and his coat looked a bit dull. I asked well known paddock judge Ken Pitterson if he looked worse than he usually does and he said he always looks that way. He had no real opposition here with everything being ridden for second place. The race did throw up the bet of the day in Sharjah without the favourite at 9/2. He may not be the horse he was but Epatante had turned in a very poor effort at Cheltenham and Zanahiyr is very one paced.

A good renewal of the Hunter Chase and an easy winner in Famous Clermont who didn't stay the trip at Cheltenham. It's a flat three miles at Punchestown and he could go there but no doubt he will be back here next season. My trip to Gowran a few weeks ago led me to back Lough Derg Spirit place only at 13/1. He was runner up to Ferns Lock there and was overpriced here.

Favourite Winged Leader was disappointing in eighth and two of his stable mates had been turned over at odds on the previous weekend so maybe he was below his best.

They looked a good bunch in the Grade 2 mares' bumper so it was a surprise to see Dysart Enos run away with the race by nine lengths. Hopefully she can jump and like last year's winner go to the top over hurdles. There should be plenty of other hurdles winners come from this race.

Friday April 14th Aintree

The Browns Advisory form had received a boost when the oddball I Am Maximus won the Irish National but Gerri Colombe probably didn't need to run up to form to take the Mildmay. Bronn third in both races exceeded expectations at Cheltenham but made mistakes here while runner up Complete Unknown is no more than a good handicapper. First time I have seen Gerri Colombe and he is a good-looking type. Promoting him to second favourite for the Gold Cup after this was however a huge over reaction. Complete Unknown just stayed on here and could be back for the National in twelve months' time.

After Fennor Cross had won the two four handicap hurdle to boost the Supreme Hurdle form Inthepocket fourth there won the Top Novice Hurdle. He had looked like two four was more his trip but he had enough speed here and it will be interesting where they go with him next season. In second Strong Leader finished like a train after looking in all sorts of trouble down the back straight. He is a super looking beast who should make a chaser and seemingly will be better for a trip. Disappointment of the race was Found a Fifty who was beaten early in the straight and he is better than he showed here.

Fakir D'oudairies was going for the hat trick in the Melling but he has not looked as good this season and was easily seen off by Pic D'Orhy who has done nothing but improve all season. He could be tried at three miles at Kempton next Christmas.

Topham winner Bill Baxter started the season rated 115 and has just got better as the season has gone on. He was 133 here and has been tried at three miles in the past. He could easily be back for the National next season.

Another improver is Sefton winner Apple Away who was beaten off 111 at Haydock as recently as December. She showed good battling skills to virtually make all and the placed horses give the form solidity. Runner up Maximilian has done nothing wrong all season while Martin Pipe winner Iroko is a super chasing type for next season. Cheltenham winner Stay Away Fay who had a hard race there finished fourth while it was a poor effort from Absolute Notions who was beaten a long way from home. It was a shame that Grey Dawning fell as he has improved physically no end since the autumn.

Saturday April 15th Aintree

A poor turnout for the Maghull novice chase with Jonbon looking a bit of a mess even for him. He had to be pushed along to get the better of old rival Calico and this told us little;

It appeared a leap of faith to make Hermes Allen favourite for the Mersey Novice Hurdle after his Cheltenham effort and he again wasn't up to the job although he ran better. With the sad demise of Dark Raven the Marine Nationale form was again to the fore with Irish Point winning cosily for Davy Russell's final winner. He is only five and maybe he will stay hurdling next season. Runner up Kateira was stepping up in class and she ran a fine race and there are plenty of mare's races for her next season.

The staying hurdlers haven't been great this season and the eleven-year-old Sire Du Berlais produced an amazing run to follow up from Cheltenham. Marie's Rock seemed to have the race won for most of the straight and appeared to stay but was brushed aside close home. Monmiral back over hurdles didn't stay while Champ who was fit for this his spring target never got involved and we might have seen the last of him.

I am not sure the bumper was a great renewal this year. Blizzard of Oz who I wouldn't think ranks highly amongst the Mullins bumper horses was favourite and looked the winner for most of the straight. He didn't like being in front and Florida Dreams weaved his way through from a bad position to take him close home.

The National was undoubtedly affected by the delay and you could see that many of the horses had got themselves very wound up beforehand. My doubt about Corach Rambler was that he would get behind early and meet trouble in running. In the end it was the placed horses who all came from too far back after he had gone for home. The handicapper will have his say about his chances of a repeat next year while the second and third are young enough to return with chances. Apart from Tiger Roll you have to go back to Mon Mome for a winner who had run in the race previously. Noble Yeats is beginning to look hard work and as in the Gold Cup was ridden a long way from home. My own main fancy The Big Dog gave me hope for a long way and stayed on well to collect the each way in fifth.

Tuesday April 25th Punchestown

Five or six years ago it seemed a matter of time before Gordon Elliot was champion trainer in Ireland with Willie Mullins just getting the better of him in the last days of the season. It has been no contest this time around and Elliot's one win over the five days came in the opening mares listed two-mile hurdle.

Shecouldbeanything had been the best of these in the mare's novice at Cheltenham and ran out a ready winner here. She could well be better over another half mile and jump a fence next season. The Model Kingdom ran better than at Cheltenham to take second place but has been a bit disappointing since the autumn. The best of the Mullins runners Night and Day had been fancied for Cheltenham but missed the meeting before running appallingly at Fairyhouse. Better here in fifth she is a big sort who will jump a fence, need at least two and a half and maybe heavy ground. Well beaten in the end Enfranchise ran well for a long way. Second in the Old Newton Cup last summer this was her debut over hurdles and she will no doubt head to Galway which her owners target every year.

With no Marine Nationale here Facile Vega returned to winning form in the two-mile Grade 1 Novice Hurdle. However, the first three all made shocking mistakes, the fourth never went a stride, and the final runner ended up lame. Facile Vega will be over fences next season but doesn't look the horse he promised to be. Runner up Il Etait Temps doesn't look a chaser and will surely struggle in open company at two miles. Found a Fifty after a poor display at Aintree was beaten after one flight here and it is to be hoped a summer break does him good. The two-mile Champion Chase was a super race. A lot more people in the stands seemed to be shouting for Chacun Pour Soi then Energumene but the favourite just got their close home. Energumene jumped shoddily and was well below his best. When I saw Chacun Pour Soi at Christmas he looked physically like a horse that was on the downgrade being completely overshadowed by Blue Lord in the parade ring. Before the race here

he looked a totally different horse and ran well above anything he has done this season. It will be hard to find races for him next time around so maybe they will call it a day. Blue Lord was better than his last two runs but this is not his trip.

The valuable Goffs Defender Bumper didn't look the best renewal. The winner Predators Gold will be a stayer over jumps. He is the second horse to win for the renewed Mullins/ Gigginstown linkup. His stable mate Milo Lises second here was offered at the sales on the Thursday but was unsold at €200K.

Only Emmet Mullins would think that the staying novice chasers aren't that good so I will send a horse beaten in his bumpers earlier in the season to a Grade 1 three-mile chase. Feronily's third to A Dream to Share at the DRF was a good run while he beat nothing in his maiden hurdle. His second when well backed on his chase debut to Bachasson beating Chacun Pour Soi (admittedly getting sixteen pounds) was a solid effort but what to make of this run. His two closest pursuers Appreciate It and James du Berlais had been beaten at Cheltenham and Fairyhouse and had hard races at both so it doesn't look Gold Cup class. Looking at the prices for Irish point winners make the £45K Feronily cost after winning a point (the form of which looks moderate) in November look a bargain and he at least has paid for himself.

The four-year-old maiden bumper didn't look a great race and the winner Angelo Dundee didn't stand out in the parade ring although he won easily enough. The ones I liked were third home Joyeux Vivo and Dollar Nolimit who was held up last for much of the way and given far too much to do.

Wednesday April 26th Punchestown

The Red Mills Hurdle Auction Series Final has quickly got itself established and this year's race was well up to standard. Sandor Clegane had run well when third in Grade 1's at the DRF and at Cheltenham in the Albert Bartlett and made his stamina count making most here. He used to get very het up before his runs but was much calmer today which is encouraging for the future which will be over fences at three miles. Second and third Della Casa Lunga and Senior Chief should also have a future. Disappointment of the race was Three Card Brag who appeared not to stay in the Albert Bartlett but faded again tamely here over half a mile shorter. Grangeclare West looked set for a good season when winning at Navan in November so to see him here in a two mile four winners of one hurdle was disappointing. He won this well enough and looks a chaser but seems hard to keep right.

There is room at the top in the staying hurdle division and we may have seen the future here with Gaelic Warrior. Upped to three miles in the novices Grade 1 he pulled all over his rivals and won with any amount in hand. He will always have the problem of jumping right but going that bit slower might help that. He paid a huge compliment to Impaire Et Passe who beat him easily at Cheltenham. Runner up Affordale Fury second in the Albert Bartlett came to lay down a challenger at the last but was easily seen off although pulling well clear of the third.

A big turnup in the Gold Cup with Fastorslow really cruising up after the second last fence to beat the big two from Cheltenham who had gone for home off the bend. The improvement from last season where he was getting beaten in handicap hurdles off marks in the 140's has been amazing. I imagine that Galopin Des Champs ran below his Cheltenham form while Bravemansgame was right up to his best. Fastorslow might have been a big price here but should not be underestimated for next season.

Having been impressed with Tullyhill at Gowran I thought he might just get the better of A Dream to Share in the Champion Bumper but the Cheltenham winner proved just too tough after looking in trouble turning in. It will be very interesting how he goes over hurdles next season. The runner up looks like he will stay two and half over jumps and I think he will be very good. They were a long way clear of the third home King of Kingsfield who is a typical big Gigginstown type future chaser.

In the Grade 3 Mares Bumper it was the Mullins second string Junta Marvel that took the honours. She looks a stayer. Her stable mate Cute Des As was my paddock pick and made a lot of the running and kept on well after being headed. Probably not super form though.

Thursday April 27th Punchestown

Despite his wins at Cheltenham and Aintree Sire Du Berlais was only fourth in the betting for the stayer's hurdle. He ran a lot sweeter here taking it up turning for home but couldn't hold the challenge of Klassical Dream and Asterion Forlonge. The winner is now four from four at this festival and after an abbreviated season had come on tons for his Cheltenham run. Asterion Forlonge has also had a short season and the return to hurdles has done him no harm. The ground was too fast for Teahupoo. Monkfish after his good return at

Fairyhouse was the first beaten and it is to be hoped that they get a good run with him in the autumn for a return to chasing.

El Fabiolo didn't have to come out of second gear to take the two-mile novice chase again beating Dysart Dynamo. He is just a tank and his clashes with Energumene will be something to look forward to next season. A good winner in the winners of one bumper with Ballyburn comfortably forging clear from some decent sorts. He could easily have gone in the Champion Bumper but may benefit from taking the easier option. He looks a stayer. Chosen Witness has been well beaten behind A Dream to Share twice kept on in fourth after leading and has plenty of size about him.

Friday April 28th Punchestown

The two five novice handicap chase usually goes to a future graded performer. Kilcruit has just been disappointing since winning the Champion Bumper here in 2021 winning just his maiden hurdle and beginners chase both at 1/5 and his jumping has not been good. Here he was sent to the front straight away and apart from two out he jumped well and won very easily off a rating of 148. He will be back into graded company with a big ratings hike for this and we will see if this is a flash in the pan.

Impervious has been a star this season winning all five and took the Grade 2 two mile five mares chase very easily. It will be interesting where they go with her next season and if she turns up in something like the John Durcan against the geldings here. Instit has improved as her jumping has got better but her stable mate Allegorie De Vassy is going the other way. She jumped big and slow losing ground at each fence and had nothing left turning in. It was surely a final start for Elimay who seems to have had enough of the game. State Man did what he has done all season in the Irish Grade 1 Hurdles winning easily. I had thought he would go chasing but evidently he will be back for the same campaign next season. Vauban was a little bit closer here than he has been and while he might improve for another summer there seems no reason to think he will bridge the gap next season. He could well be kept busy on the flat with trips to Ascot and York for the Ebor possible.

The main danger to State Man may come from Impaire Et Passe who took the two four novice hurdle easily in the end despite looking ill at ease for most of the race. He has the scope for chasing so we will see how connections see it. High Definition is looking the same over hurdle as he was on the flat which is disappointing. If they are going to continue over hurdles perhaps he needs gelding. There are plenty of better Galileos at stud already.

Plenty of the placed connections on the week were happy enough but you could see the disappointment of the David Christie camp after another second place in the Champion Hunter Chase. Barry O'Neill seemed to have timed it right on Vaucelet but just could not get passed Cheltenham runner up It's On The Line. It was forty lengths back to the third. The winner is another cheap buy by Emmet Mullins. This one after two poor point runs for just £8K. Where he goes after this is anyone's guess but at only six he could go handicapping.

Some good sorts in the two-mile two maiden bumper and the fact that Cheltenham fourth Lecky Watson could only manage fifth here gives it some solidity. The first four Walk Away Hero, Irish Panther, Dr Eggman (who went on my tracker after his first run over a year ago) and Quantum Storm should all have futures.

Saturday April 29th Punchestown

It was April 2015 that Blast of Koeman made his racecourse debut in the Land Rover Bumper finishing sixth to Petit Mouchoir. He hasn't missed a Punchestown festival since and was making his eleventh festival appearance when just failing to get up in the opening cross-country race. There is every chance he will be back again next year.

More pace in the mares hurdle here than at Cheltenham and an easy win for Echoes in Rain but the race fell apart. Runner Up Anna Bunina is a super horse running for the sixteenth time since winning last season Scottish Champion Hurdle but she is a 140 horse at her very best. Love Envoi and Brandy Love both ran very poorly and Epatante is going backwards with every run.

The final Grade 1 of the meeting was for the juveniles and the leader of the pack Lossiemouth won again. She didn't beat Zarak the Brave by as far as she had back in December on her Irish debut. The runner up who had been off since then looked a strong sort but will face the hard second season without the winner's choice of going in with the mares.

Saturday May 13th Haydock

I first saw Willaston when he made his course debut to win a maiden hurdle at Gowran in October 2021. He looked a scopey sort and he went into my tracker. He then missed six months and looked moderate on seven runs in the spring but was well backed twice once getting a less than great ride. Connections had obviously seen enough and he was transferred to Mark Walford for £11,500. I too gave up on him so seeing him win at Cheltenham at 33/1 and here at 14/1 unbacked was a bit painful. He is big enough to go chasing sometime but might still have another hurdle race in him. He gets three miles well.

Brentford Hope was a crazy price at 11/4 for the Swinton which was much more wide open than that. Harry Derham has set off very well as a trainer but his horses are starting to be over bet already. The favourite was under pressure when a mistake three out finished his chance. Teddy Blue would have won but for a mistake at the last giving it to Black Poppy. Only five Teddy Blue still probably has improvement in him.

Hurricane Fly's half-brother Scandisk Park was favourite for the bumper after two just O.K. efforts in Irish points. Although transferred to Nicky Henderson's yard he was still owned by Paul Holden who shelled out £200K for him as a store. After those point runs for his daughter Ellmarie the horse was unsold at £295K last December. Beaten forty odd lengths here he may look the part but he wouldn't fetch anything like that now. The winner Flying Fortune won well but what the form is worth is anyone's guess.

Spring Trophy winner Angel Bleu won a couple of pretty ordinary Group 1's as a two-year-old but failed to win at three. There are plenty of Group 3's around for him at seven furlongs.

Friday May 19th York

Two-year-old fillies heading for the Queen Mary in the listed five-furlong race. Favourite Persian Dreamer was standout in the parade ring being a larger model than her rivals but she was outpaced close home. She will be better at six. Winner Got To Love A Grey followed up an easy maiden win nicely from stable mate Dorothy Lawrence who I didn't particularly like as an individual. Maiden Gaiden in third looked a nice sort who will improve.

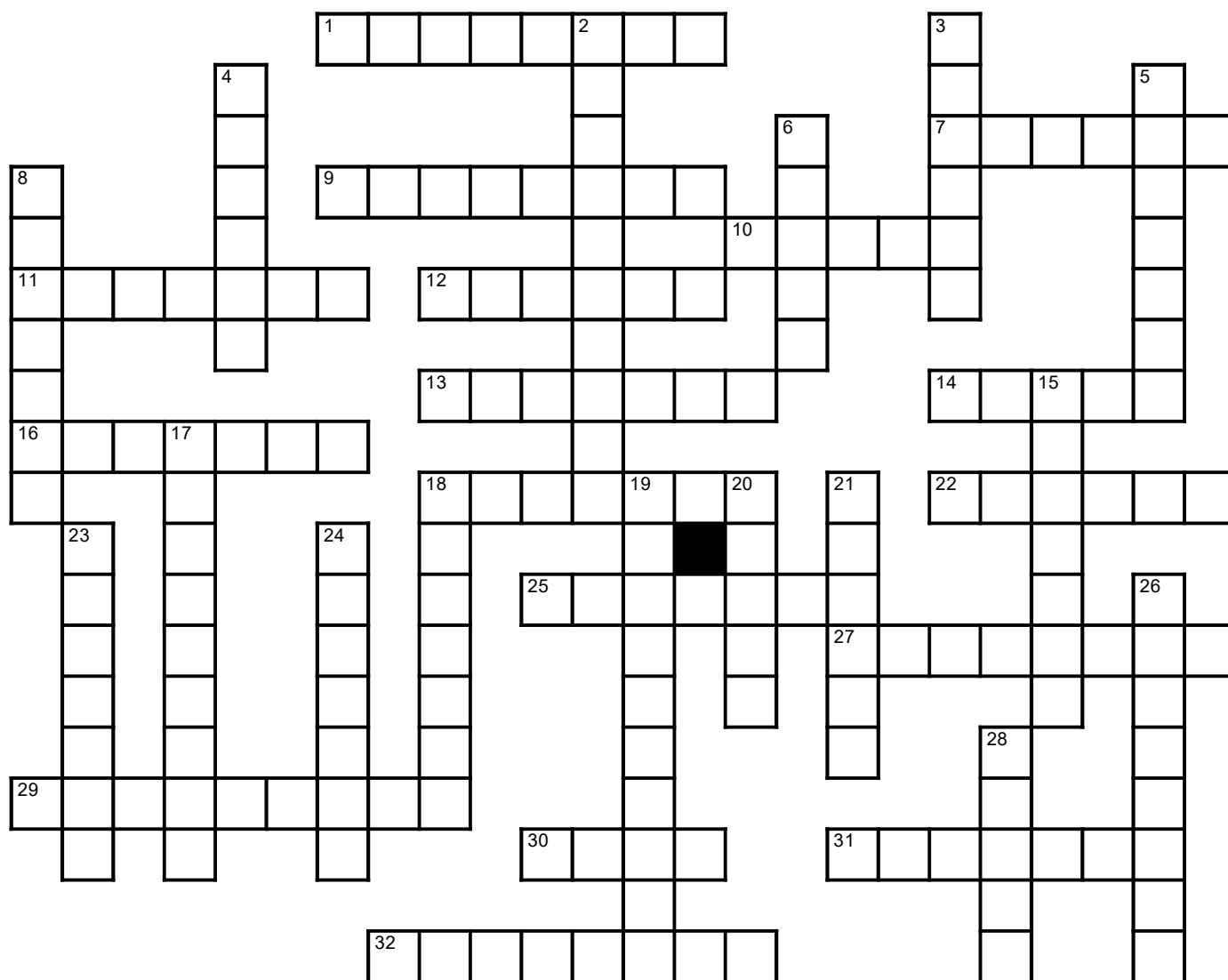
The second listed race of the day was for three-year-old fillies and had some nice sorts. The first three Sounds of Heaven, Queen For You, and Silver Lady can step up to Group company. Back in fifth Clochette on seasonal debut was given an easy time of it and will be interesting dropped back to a filly's handicap. No Stradivarius in the Yorkshire Cup but a competitive field. The four-year-olds came out on top with Giavellotto (pictured below) stepping up and just holding fast finishing Leger winner Eldar Eldarov. Andrea Atzeni tried his best to give it away by switching his whip for no real reason and badly checking the third and fourth. Giavellotto evidently doesn't go to Ascot for the Gold Cup but the runner up does. He looks a true stayer but most of the field will be new to the trip with last year's runners all absent.

After Passengers unlucky run in the Dante the placed horses from the Wood Ditton turned up in the mile novice race. Both were well beaten by Mostabshir who sprinter clear from two furlongs out to win by five lengths giving his rivals six pounds. He is a very solid deep girthed individual who didn't stand out beforehand and could well still have some improvement in him. Stand out in the parade ring was runner up Ziryab who could be better as the season goes on.



MAL BOYLE'S EPSOM DERBY PUZZLE

33 Derby winners have been included in the puzzle. All that is asked of you is that you determine the horses and then fit them into the grid! Entries to be sent in by July 29th to NMRC at 53, Dalebrook Rd, Sale, M33 3LB or e mail info@northernracingclub.com The winner will receive either a book prize or a free club competition entry.



Years of winners 'across':

1953 (5) - 1960 (7) - 1962 (8) - 1969 (8) - 1970 (8) - 1971 (8) - 1975 (6) - 1979 (4) - 1980 (6) - 1981 (7) - 1983 (7) - 1989 (7) - 2001 (7) - 2005 (9) - 2016 (7) - 2018 (5) - 2021 (6)

Years of winners 'down':

1780 (6) - 1929 (5) - 1935 (6) - 1945 (5) - 1963 (5) - 1965 (7) - 1968 (7) - 1984 (7) - 1985 (10) - 1988 (7) - 1991 (8) - 1994 (6) - 2000 (7) - 2012 (7) - 2014 (9) - 2015 (10)

The number of letters (in brackets) do not determine the number of words!

Winner of the Grand National puzzle set by Mal Boyle last time was Alan Wooton from Northampton.

CELEBRATE WORLD GIN DAY AT CATTERICK RACES – JUNE 10TH

Catterick Racecourse's fixture on Saturday 10 June coincides with World Gin Day, and to celebrate, the racecourse, in partnership with its caterers CGC Event Caterers, are offering a complimentary Gin and Tonic to the first 100 people to arrive at the main entrance.

The gates will open to the public for the Gin Festival Raceday at midday and a thrilling seven race card awaits racegoers looking to get closer to the action, with the first race scheduled for 2.10pm. The feature race is the five-furlong Download the Vickers.Bet App Handicap Stakes at 4.30pm, while the last race is scheduled for 5.40pm. Alongside the racing action, racegoers can enjoy live music from Stockton-on-Tees based singer and guitarist Tom Powell and there will be a selection of gins available to try throughout the day at Carol's Gin Bar. Racegoers will also have the opportunity to win tickets to a future Catterick raceday by entering the competition on raceday-ready.com and for those new to racing, Amy Ryan, Catterick's raceday presenter, will be providing some additional commentary and racing insights whilst the horses are in the Parade Ring. Amy is a successful former jockey, daughter of North Yorkshire trainer Kevin Ryan and Racing TV presenter with a wealth of knowledge about the sport.

Emma Stevenson, General Commercial Manager at Catterick Racecourse said: "We're looking forward to celebrating World Gin Day with our racegoers at the Gin Festival Raceday on Saturday 10 June. It's going to be an action-packed day with lots to enjoy throughout the afternoon – be sure to arrive early to enjoy a complimentary G&T on arrival!"

As with all Catterick's fixtures, under 18's race free and on 10 June, younger racegoers will be able to enjoy side stall games, a giant inflatable Helter Skelter and bouncy castles in the Course Enclosure amidst the racing action. Families are also welcome to enjoy picnics in the Course Enclosure. Hospitality for this fixture is fully booked, but general admission tickets are still available, with advanced booking discounts on offer until 48 hours prior to the raceday. Racegoers can also pre-order their race cards and receive a 20% discount.

Course Enclosure tickets are just £5 per adult when booked at least 48 hours in advance (£7 on the day), while Grandstand & Paddock Enclosure tickets are £15 each in advance or £18 on the day. Tickets are available to book both online at catterickbridge.co.uk and over the phone by calling the racecourse office on 01748 811478 and will also be available at the gates on the day.

For those racegoers travelling by public transport, or staying in Richmond, a complimentary shuttle bus runs on race days between Richmond Market Place to the racecourse, starting one hour prior to the first race. The shuttle bus will return to Richmond after the last race.

ALAN HOWES UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT – COMPILED BY BRIAN GOODWILL

What first sparked your interest in racing?

My interest came from Grand National day initially was a big occasion in our family household growing up. We would have lots of relations round for the day and walk to the betting shop in the morning to put our bets on. We would have a 'National Buffet' before settling down to watch the Grandstand coverage hosted by Des Lynam! I used to make my own National racecard and re-watch the race on beta-max video for the rest of the year perfecting my race calling skills from about the age of 6.

Your favourite racehorse when you were growing up?

It was undoubtedly Desert Orchid. After he won his first King George in 1986 he really captured my imagination and followed him throughout the rest of his career, excitedly informing anyone who would listen about his next race and his career record! I remember putting in a new personal best time running home from school on Thursday 16th March 1989. I was clock watching all day long in anticipation of his run in the Gold Cup. Having sprinted out of the school gates I made it back just in time to see him hitting the front up the run in overhauling the gallant Yahoo, great memories!

Which race that you have not yet called would you like to call?

I have been lucky enough to call races at most of the tracks up and down the country since I first came on to the roster in 2004. I would like to call a meeting at both Cartmel and York as those two venues would complete the set for me.

Your most challenging day on-course?

I think every day is a new challenge in the commentary box, you never really know what's going to happen from one race to the next and I love the unscripted nature of the role in general.

I think learning the different coloured caps for multiple Gigginstown or J P McManus runners in the Grand National is always tricky, all the various combinations and with plenty happening in the race makes you think twice before committing to a faller.

The Ayr Gold Cup of 2021 was an interesting race. I was the only caller on the track that day, so I was going out on ITV as well as Racing TV, so there was a little more pressure than usual to get it right. They split as usual in the huge field, but unusually 23 horses raced far side and only Bielsa stayed near side. It was a difficult race to call as you couldn't really judge conclusively until very late on, I managed to give him a good few mentions throughout, but could only be sure he was definitely in front about 50 yards out!

Poor weather conditions can certainly be a commentating hazard. I remember calling a bumper at Huntingdon one mid-winter's afternoon, the rain was coming into the box in horizontal fashion there was no hiding place, my racing post card for the race was a soggy unusable mess after half a mile I was cowering in the box, fortunately there weren't many runners and so was able to get through the call with a few timely wipes of the binoculars to work out what was happening.

What would you put in Racing's Room 101?

Controversially I'm going to say the whip. I think we are going to be heading that way anyway. There are racing authorities that have already banned its use except in certain circumstances. I think selling the sport to up-coming new racegoers is going to become more difficult with the visuals of using a whip to make encourage a horse to win a race. I have heard this first hand from my kids, potential racegoers of the future, asking why those jockeys are hitting those "pretty" horses. Even when I explain about the new style whips etc and new rules I think the visual aspect going forward is hard to sell? I think racing should be pro-active and maybe phase it out gradually. Introducing a hands and heels race each day for professional riders and take it from there perhaps?

What do you do to relax away from work?

I really enjoy getting to spend time with the family, our 3 kids keep us very busy, we love exploring new places and going on adventures with them. If possible I manage to sneak in the odd round of Golf, but my game is nowhere near as good as it was before I had any responsibilities!

Can you recall a particular funny on-course experience?

We are often asked as on-course commentators to call additional 'races' at the track before or during racing. Mascot races are always great fun, The mascot national at Wetherby in late April is usually complete carnage. I remember calling a mascot event at Newcastle one evening October 2019. It was a fairly small turnout but most of the Mascots fell at some point during the 200yd dash and it was won by 'Bungles Twanger', probably won't be calling home a horse of the same name though anytime soon. Here is the link: <https://fb.watch/kIC3m24EEE/>

What can you recall from your first days commentating on-course?

I remember being quite nervous on the drive to Southwell on a cold January morning in 2004. During the early months of the commentating we shared race cards with another commentator to help the newbies acclimatise. I was with John Hunt that day. My first ever call on track was a small field claimer won by Hurricane Coast. I was happy / relieved with my call when he crossed the line, only for John, looking very serious, to say to me when I turned off the mic, Al, they have got to go round again, thankfully it was only a 6f event I am pleased to say.

Who are your own favourite sports commentators?

I think we have a high-class bunch of callers in the UK at the moment, British racing is in good shape for commentators going forward. I always admired Peter O'Sullivan growing up had a lovely tone to his calls and told the story of a race brilliantly. I'm also a big fan of Trevor "And Away They Go" Denman, a tremendous race caller stateside. Unexpectedly I met him one night when calling at Newton Abbot, he was over here on holiday in 2008, it was a surreal moment when he walked into the box to say hello that night.

Can you give us a horse to follow?

Imperial Merlin. A promising novice hurdler last season, winning 3-times for John Quinn. He's done plenty already in his career but he looks he has real potential as a future chase, look out for him over fences next season.

GO RACING IN YORKSHIRE NEWS WITH CHARLOTTE RUSSELL

Go Racing In Yorkshire Summer Festival.

New dates have been announced for the 2023 festival which will now start at Pontefract's evening meeting on Friday 21st July, where racegoers will be treated to some competitive racing and afterwards, a performance by Dreams of Fleetwood Mac.

The festival will culminate at York's Music Showcase weekend on Saturday 29th July where racing highlights include the Group 2 Sky Bet York Stakes and Craig David will be in action on the stage.

During the festival week, racing takes place at eight of Yorkshire's racecourses over the nine-day period and explaining the change to the fixtures, Go Racing In Yorkshire Chairman, Ben Warn said,

"Pontefract's evening fixture of racing combined with music ensures we can get the festival off to a good start, setting the scene for the family fun week it will be.

Taking place during the first week of the Summer Holidays younger racegoers can enjoy a Circus Family Fun day at Redcar on Sunday 23rd July, as well as family fun activities at Thirsk on Friday 28th July. Accompanied under 18's are admitted free to all of the fixtures and admission starts from as little as £5.

In addition to music on the opening and closing days of the festival, The Human League will be taking to the stage after evening racing at York on Friday 28th July.

Yorkshire's Best Dressed Series To Start In June

It's time to get the outfits ready, make the hairdresser and barber appointments and order the accessories as the Ladies' Days return to the racing calendar. Katie Newsam (below) was the 2022 final winner.



The best dressed series starts at Wetherby's evening meeting on Tuesday, June 13 and finishes at Doncaster during their St Leger meeting in September. The best dressed racecourse winners will then go forward to the Go Racing In Yorkshire best dressed final which will be decided by public vote.

Each of Yorkshire's nine racecourses will be running a variety of competitions, varying between best dressed lady, best dressed man, best dressed racegoer, best dressed couple and best hat – there really is something for everyone!

Charlotte Russell, General Manager of Go Racing In Yorkshire said,

"Ladies' Days are so popular across Yorkshire's courses and each racecourse holds their ladies' day in their own unique way. The effort that the racegoers put in for the occasion is a sight to behold and it adds a real buzz to the day with the bonus of some great prizes to be won."

The prize for the winner of the Best Dressed Final is a "Country Getaway", with a two-night stay for two people in a traditional style shepherd hut at Country Huts on the Wolds, the use of a luxurious Land Rover vehicle for two days from Lloyd Land Rover, York and country attire from Parnaby's, Malton, plus a day of racing including lunch at a Yorkshire racecourse of the winner's choice.

For more information and to book tickets, please visit www.goracing.co.uk

FRED ARCHER REMEMBERED

By HAROLD HEYS

JUST about everybody with an interest in horse racing has heard of Fred Archer who rode a string of Classic winners and landed several championships in the 19th century, before taking his own life.

His was a rags-to-riches story which took him to the heights of his profession as probably the greatest rider of all time. It was also a life beset by having to waste violently to lose weight. The never-ending battle with the scales, and the tragedy of losing his baby daughter and his beloved wife left him a physical and mental wreck.



The story of Fred Archer's colourful but desperately sad life is told in an excellent hour-long programme on the Internet. David Yates tells the story for Racing TV on You Tube – and it's well worth watching.

In fact, there are a lot of excellent programmes on racing, its horses and jockeys, its ups and downs, And during the coming months we will be pointing Racin' members in the right direction to enjoy them in the comfort of their own homes.

But, meanwhile, back to Fred Archer who was known affectionately among the Victorian-era punters as The Tin Man, "tin" being a slang word for money and perhaps a play on "thin." Fred, born into a poor family in a small cottage in Cheltenham, arrived in Newmarket as a 12-year-old and survived the rough and tumble of an apprentice's life to climb to the top of the tree.

His dad had been a National Hunt jockey and he pushed and pushed the youngster who proved himself to be as tough as old boots. He was associated with some of the finest horses to grace the Turf in the Victorian era, among them the unbeaten St Simon and Epsom Derby winners Ormonde and Bend Or.

Stories about Archer flow through the programme and David Yates is in excellent form. The day Muley Edris got his revenge on the Newmarket gallops for a severe thrashing. The horse waited two years before knocking Archer to the ground where he proceeded to carry him off in its mouth before ripping the muscles of his right arm. The brute then stamped on him before running off.

Three weeks later, his arm strapped to his side and still in agony, Archer kicked home his first Derby winner.

But it is the story of Archer's death in 1886 – at the age of 29 – that takes your breath. He was ill at his home, Falmouth House, Newmarket, having been struck down with a combination of severe wasting and typhoid. Burglaries were common in the area as Archer had a loaded pistol by his bed...

It was exactly two years since his beloved wife Nellie had died in childbirth. He suddenly got up, opened the drawer and took out this

pistol. His sister was in the room and she made a desperate lunge for the weapon. But he was too strong for her. With his left hand he blew the side of his head away, spurting blood everywhere. He died instantly. And the whole country was thrown into mourning for "The Favourite Jockey." He was 29.

THERE are lots of very interesting features on the Internet including pieces on Gordon Richards and Lester Piggott, Frankel and Arkle and some wonderful characters and places.

(Above) Fred Archer in the colours of Lord Falmouth for whom he rode many winners. *Cartoon by Spy(Vanity Fair Magazine).*

HERITAGE HANDICAPS CHALLENGE 2023

The Heritage Handicap Competition is back for another season, a challenge for all flat racing fans. It will run throughout the main flat season starting on Saturday 3rd June (Derby Day) and ending at Ascot in October on Champions Day.

This year the races chosen by the organiser (Helen Goodwill) will be the highest profile handicap race in UK each Saturday and Helen will e mail/text details to the entrants each week.

Entrants can select three horses which they think will win or be placed in the nominated race. Points will be awarded as per the Tote dividend (win and place) with the exception of 'world pool' races where SP's will be used to score the 4th placed horse if no Tote dividend is given. The number of places scoring points is to be determined by the number of runners in the race, using the normal each way rules. If you select more than one placed horse, you will score the points gained from all of them. A league table will be compiled with the total points scored.

To add a bit of extra skill, those who successfully pick the first two home of any eligible race will go into another 'Exacta' league. This will be run separately from the main league. If all three selections finish in the first three places entrants will also receive a 100% bonus on the published Tote Exacta dividend.

The prize money will be allocated as follows: 80% of the entry fees will go into the main competition with 20% being given to the winner of the exacta league. If nobody selects an exacta throughout the whole season, the prize money for that league will be given to the Injured Jockeys Fund. The number of prizes available will be advised once the number of entries is known.

It costs £10 to enter with all entry fees added to the prize fund. If you wish to send entry fee electronically please e mail info@northernracingclub.com for details. To enter by post please complete the slip below.

Selections are accepted via text, email or answer phone. Each initial entry will be acknowledged and an entry number allocated. If entrants also require a paper copy of the rules please send a SAE with the entry form - internet entrants will receive confirmation via e mail.

The competition is open to all registered members plus any other family members at the same address. If you have any other friends/family who would like to join in, please ask them to register as a FREE online member before entering the competition. Only one entry is allowed for each person.

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## HERITAGE HANDICAPS ENTRY FORM 2023

Please accept this entry for the 2023 Competition. I am also enclosing entry fee of £10 per person (payable to North & Midlands Racing Club). Please enclose SAE for paper copy of the rules.

Name(s).....  
Address.....  
.....  
Phone/Mobile.....  
Email.....

Please return to Helen Goodwill, North & Midlands Racing Club, 124 Lindsell Rd, Altrincham, Cheshire. WA14 5NZ.

# NMRC'S 'EPSOM DERBY' BOOK COMPETITION

This time the winner will receive a book prize or a free competition entry.

Entrants need to work out which eleven past Epsom winners are indicated by the photos below chosen by Harold Heys & Phil Evans. 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 might not need all eleven correct to win ! Clue - Picture 1 was 'big' in the 1960's!

Once you have your answers, please e mail to [info@northernracingclub.com](mailto: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 29<sup>th</sup> July. If there is more than one all correct entry than a draw will be made to determine the winner.

Thanks to all who entered the Grand National competition – the winner was **Barry McNichol** from Cumbria and your book prize should be on its way to you shortly.

The answers last time were (1) Rag Trade (an old TV show about a factory where clothes were actually made in the UK!) (2) Tiger Roll (3) Earth Summit (photo showed the Earth Summit held in Rio) (4) Jack Horner (5) Teal (6) Well To Do (7) The Lamb (8) Papillon (breed of dog) (9) Monty's Pass (10) Oxo (famous TV advert back in the day!)



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



# THE PERTH FESTIVAL 2023

BY PHIL EVANS

Its five years since my last visit to the Perth Festival (when I took in just the first two days) but this time I decided to take in all three days. My drive up North takes the best part of 6 hours (from South Manchester) including taking a short break every 2 hours. We found a nice holiday home to rent for the week at Blairgowrie, about 10 miles north of the racecourse – much handier staying north of the course so you don't have to travel through Perth on the race days. (Details of the two bedroom home available on request).

My pre booked ticket for all three days cost just £50 – about the same as a few beers and a burger at other festivals! Once inside, the course offers complimentary race cards as well. There was a nice little café to use behind the main stand with home-made food and reasonable prices e.g. good quality latte just £2.20. Plenty of bars for those who are not driving. Even the bookies seemed more generous with most offering  $\frac{1}{4}$  the odds on ALL races for each way betting. The crowds on the first two days were good, but still comfortable, whilst on the Friday the attendance was nearly doubled with 'the drinkers' arriving by the coachloads from the big cities of Glasgow & Edinburgh to soak up the beer, racing and after racing music event.

On the racing front, one thing that stood out was that many front runners seem to be able to dictate the races with relatively few winners coming from off the pace. In general, Perth's meetings attract plenty of Irish trained horses with Gordon Elliott being the leading trainer at the track over the last five years. Apart from the first day, there were, however, relatively few runners from Ireland this April.

That said, the meeting started with an 80/1 winner and 100/1 third trained in Ireland! The big race on Wednesday (Listed Mares Chase) was won by *Pink Legend* who was also 2<sup>nd</sup> in the race in 2022.

Highlight of Day 2 for me was the win of veteran *Caius Marcius* who won at 20/1 in the six runner 2m 4f Handicap Hurdle with Brian Hughes getting up on the line to win by a nose. My own bet was placed earlier in the day at 8/1 - so thank goodness for best odds guarantees! From the cheering across the stands it seemed to me that half the racegoers on-course had backed the horse so how it drifted to 20/1 is a mystery!

Day 3 and the big race (Highland National) went to *If Not For Dylan* who drifted in the market from 14/1 to 22/1 at the off. Jockey Alan Doyle was claiming a useful 5lbs allowance. Just before the 7<sup>th</sup> race on the card a rather 'happy' Glaswegian guy came up to me with his arm around my shoulder (to steady himself from falling?) saying that he needed a winner and could I help? 'Well' I said '*Haribo Collonges* is my biggest bet of the day so go with that if you want'. With Brian Hughes taking a late spare ride on the horse, after Tom O'Brien was stood down, my selection duly obliged at odds of 11/2 and hopefully my new Glaswegian pal enjoyed a few more bevies at the after-racing party with his winnings!



As can be seen from the photo (left) the course is adjacent to Scone Palace which is also well worth a visit during any stays locally.

I chatted to RTV presenter Gordon Brown on one of the days and Gordon (who lives close to Carlisle) told me he preferred to travel daily to Perth despite the long drive. 'Why?' I asked and the response was 'I can't keep up with the rest of the team any more – they didn't get back to their accommodation until 3.30am yesterday!' That perhaps sums up the Perth Festival – where

everyone has a great time! I found a nice spot to sit down (between races) just outside the weighing room which was also great for getting a few pictures – here are a few from there and the parade ring:



From L to R (above) – Willie Carson spotted in the parade ring on the first day; Tom O'Brien being given the saddle by Henry Daly before riding Bridge North (fell in the race) just before his retirement at Sandown the next day; Ryan Mania seemingly telling connections of *Doyen Breed* that he was an unlucky faller on Day 3



From L to R (above) – Sean Bowen being interviewed by Gordon Brown after winning on *Resplendent Grey*; Brian Hughes returning to the winners enclosure after winning on *Haribo Collonges*; Perth track layout.

Next copy deadline for Racin' will be Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July  
Please e mail any articles to [info@northernracingclub.com](mailto:info@northernracingclub.com)