

Racin'



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MORE 'TRENDS GUIDES' NOW AVAILABLE!

Longstanding members will be aware that around 10 'festival guides' are produced on the club website each year and also Carlisle trends guides produced both on our website and in the actual race cards – space permitting.

In July we also started putting trends guides for Cartmel & Pontefract meetings on the club website.

Starting with the October meetings, trends guides for Hexham will also be produced.

Not tips but just key facts and figures to help members draw up a short list of possible winners!

Visit www.northernracingclub.com and click on either a racecourse or the festival guides tab.

EDITOR'S NOTES 'SINCE LAST TIME'

With summer officially over its nearly time to get ready for the new jumps season with some better horses coming back on track in October – before that we have the usual run of near impossible 'big handicaps' on the flat as well as the Arc and of course Ascot's Champions Day.

Amongst my summer racedays I returned to Thirsk after many years away. In my role with NMRC I contact many courses and usually have a great rapport but for some unknown reason Thirsk doesn't like us, so when they do reply its usually a curt bordering on rude response (such as when my article on annual memberships was published earlier this year and I asked them to send me details if they wanted to be included).

My trip in August involved quite a long drive (nearly 3 hours) and I only arrived just before the first race. Knowing I needed to leave before the end I decided it was easier to drive to the end of the car park field so as not to get boxed in. The car park was only half full at that time yet the car park attendant (an elderly lady) decided to follow me 800 yards up the field to announce that 'you cannot park here – its for staff only' Well there were no signs to say that and surely no more staff would turn up 5 minutes before the first race?

Anyway I moved as requested but as a paying customer this is hardly the best way to greet customers if you want them to ever return again!! The rest of the evening was fine with a good crowd on for a Friday night, a band playing between races and overall very good food and seating facilities. Just a shame they are not a bit more friendly!



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COMPETITION NEWS

59's DRAW RESULTS UPDATE

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

Aug 3rd – 07 – Brendan OMeara
Sept 7th – 02 – Maureen Dawson

Your £50 prizes will be with you shortly.

The winning number is determined by the 'bonus ball' drawn in the UK Lottery on the 1st Saturday of the month.

Thanks to all who continue to support the draw which helps cover the club's website/domain name fees plus trophy engraving costs etc.

We currently have THREE available numbers - please e mail info@northernracingclub.com for further details. It costs just £1pm to enter, payable yearly or quarterly.

HERITAGE HANDICAPS COMPETITION 2024

With just four weeks to go at the time of writing the leaders in the main competition are as follows:

129.65	Gordon Armitstead
118.4	Dave Clutterbuck
113.85	John Boswell
112.45	Rob McDermott
110.2	Darren Snowball
104.3	Harry Sandland
98.55	Diane Bates
96.15	Phil Evans
95.15	Dave Byrne

93.65	Mark Banks
90.6	Alan Hill
90.15	Harold Woodward
89.35	Eunice Flynn
88	Jim Flanagan

In the supplementary 'Exacta League' the leaders are as follows:

415.1	Jim Flanagan
315	Michael Wheeler
300.4	Mike Campbell
182.8	Eunice Flynn
161.4	Dave Bates
154.5	Alan Hill
152	Gordon Armitstead
143.7	Harry Sandland
136.5	Ken Unsworth
132.3	Kate Ah-Moye
110.3	Dave Clutterbuck
99.3	Eddie Carson
93.3	Harold Woodward
82.2	Craig McConnachie
81	Phil Evans
71.9	Helen Goodwill

Graham Lee at Doncaster — By Harold Heys

WHAT a great photograph! And what a bright smile from jockey Graham Lee surrounded by all his jockey mates at Doncaster on St Leger Day... And then you look a little bit closer and you can see that everyone is trying just that little bit harder... especially Graham...



And you immediately think back some ten months to that evening at Newcastle when he came off his mount, Ben Macdui, at the start of a five-furlong sprint and took a very heavy fall. That was the last time he had moved of his own volition. And here he was smiling away for the crowd and the jocks and his family.

The race was a sponsored event for jockey Lee and the injured jockeys' fund and everyone there rallied round to add their fivers and tenner's to the pot.

Racing fans hadn't seen much news on the former riders rehabilitation in recent months. When riding, Graham will be best remembered for coasting home on Amberleigh House in the 2005 Grand National at Aintree and also his victory in the Ascot Gold Cup on the Queen Mother's Trip to Paris a few years later. It was, and remains, a unique double top.

Within a few days of the fall, last November, Graham had undergone spinal surgery for life-changing injuries and his teenage daughter Aby had set up a Just Giving Page to begin to raise money for his care. Within a few days she had raised over £100 for her Dad who is held in the greatest esteem by every lover of the game. Within a few weeks the total had soared past £200,000 and now it's well past £300,000.

I'd knocked out a piece for Racing Magazine just before Christmas, but I hadn't seen much in the National Press during the summer – at least till Daily Mail racing correspondent Dominic King caught up with him and his family at Doncaster a couple of weeks ago.

It was a nice piece, as we say. King spoke to a couple of Graham's close mates among the riding fraternity, jocks Paul Mulrennan and PJ McDonald who are usually lively souls, but were more than subdued when talking about Lee's injury. Ben Macdui lurched as the gate went up and Lee was hurled over the horse's withers and crashed on to the Tapeta. He didn't move.

McDonald first came across Lee at the stables of the late Ferdy Murphy. Riding on the Flat and over the sticks are very different," he says. "I'll never know how Graham was able to compete at the very top in both sports. He is totally dedicated," says Mulrennan: "Racing is a very cut-throat business. But when something like this happens it's amazing how everything comes together. He is simply dedicated to the game."

No one knows how things will turn out. But it's not going to be easy for 47-year-old Graham Lee who lives in Bedale, North Yorkshire. However, it must be a comfort to see how much his old weighing room adversaries care about his ongoing struggle.

The IJF was of course founded after terrible injuries to Tim Brookshaw at Aintree in 1963 and Paddy Farrell – injured in the 1964 Grand National. In more recent times J T McNamara, Freddy Tylicki and Sharon Murgatroyd are amongst the list of jockeys that have been confined to wheelchairs as a result of riding incidents in more recent times

GORDON ARMISTEAD'S RACING DIARY

Saturday August 10th Haydock

Premier race days have now been going for more than six months and I am still trying to see the point or that they are making any difference. Today was a Premier day and what do we get. A Grade 3, a listed filly's race but also two 0-70 handicaps and two 0-75 handicaps. The other two handicaps were a slightly higher standard but with the Grade 2 only having five runners and the listed race being a modest affair there was no way this could be described as anything but a very ordinary meeting.

Anmaat was far from fully wound up after a year off but just got away with it in the Rose of Lancaster.

The fillies in the listed race had had thirty-seven attempts in Stakes races with only Caernarfon, who is on the downgrade, being successful. It would be a poor Group 3 for any of these to be competitive.

Wednesday August 21st York

Not for the first time this summer getting too or from a meeting wasn't easy. A local bridge between home and the M61 was closed meaning a fifteen-mile detour and then the M1 was closed just after the M62 junction. Luckily, I was far enough back to whip down the M621 and then get back to the M62 to go via Ferrybridge. Another moan before getting to the racing. The standard of commentating has never been better. Those on the northern circuit are as good as you get so why do York let the worst commentator on the roster have the best meeting in the north.

The racing. The betting had the Acomb as a match between Godolphin and Coolmore. The Godolphin runner Ruling Court (by the Coolmore sire Justify) was a mess. Sweating profusely you would have been brave to take the even money. He finished third without ever looking likely to win. The Lion in Winter is unusual for Coolmore being by Sea The Stars and his year older full sister is a very poor runner. Always prominent Ryan Moore went on three out and it was soon over. He is now favourite for the Derby and while that is a long way off he certainly leads the pack at the moment. Runner up Wimbledon Hawkeye was beaten further by another Godolphin runner Ancient Truth on his previous run but lost ground at the start that day.

It's not often you get a Derby winner in the Great Voltiguer nowadays. Reference Point was the last Epsom winner to win here while Premonition in 1953 and Ragusa in 1963 won after winning at the Curragh. Los Angeles is a big beast and while he might not have a great turn of foot, he is a galloper and very game. Leading two out he was challenged by his stable mate Illinois but was always just holding him. The stable has a few others for the St Leger so I doubt he will go that way. Given his size he might be better next year. Illinois will go to Doncaster and he looks a proper stayer so will not fail there for stamina. Third King's Gambit didn't just get home having got into second a furlong out. They should find a group race for him at ten furlongs.

The International is usually a four-year-old plus race and when a three-year-old wins he/she is usually out of the top bracket. Arabian Queen's win in 2015 will remain one of those inexplicable results. City of Troy is the seventh Derby winner to do the double and he is right up there with the best. Was the pacemaker there as a ruse and Ryan Moore always intended to make the running only connections will know. Once he went for home he was never going to be beaten. He evidently goes to Del Mar and the Classic on the dirt. While that will be a whole different ball game his sire was a dirt horse and there doesn't look to be a Flightline around in the States this year. Can we hope that he will be around next season? I somehow doubt it.

The runner up Calandagan came with a great run and while he never looked like winning he was well clear in second place. He will be around for some time being a gelding but the obvious target of the Arc is out of bounds to him. It surely is time that the rule geldings are not eligible for some Group 1's was abolished as it makes no sense. If they had the rule in Group 1 sprints there would hardly be any runners. It has hardly done the breeding industry in the states any harm that geldings can run in the triple crown races.

Third home Ghostwriter is outrunning his pedigree (his full brother Circuit Blazing is next to useless in Hong Kong). After four decent runs in Group 1's he is going to have to drop down to find a race. Fourth home Bluestocking can drop back to Mares and fillies' races. Of the others, Ambiente Friendly looked light in condition and pulled too hard in the race. He looked to have had enough for now or perhaps we have seen the best of him.

I backed Samui when he won the Lartigue Hurdle at Listowel last September and at the time he looked a progressive good ground hurdler. I was amazed to see him favourite for the two-mile handicap here off a rating of 102 but he ran a fine race in second. Winner was fellow Irish raider Extensio. Trainer Pat O'Donnell has only the six horses in training but has an improving stayer on his hands who also won his only hurdle run. I remember a super interview when his daughter Sylvia rode this horse to win at Fairyhouse and he gave another excellent one with Lydia Hislop here.

On fast ground the draw bias on the straight track comes into play here and I decided to do some exactas on some of the lowly drawn animals in the three sprints. All three winners at 10/1 13/2 and 12/1 but no exactas although just a neck off in the last.

Thursday September 5th Haydock

The two-year-old races were the interesting ones. The seven-furlong maiden was a fairly average event. We Dare To Dream won after a couple of second places making all and will go into handicaps. He looked a straightforward sort and should do well if given a fair mark. Newcomers Mystical Storm and Kirkdale ran well in third and fifth with the latter looking a nice sort in the parade ring.

Green Icon took the seven-furlong nursery easily off 76. I am not sure he beat much so hopefully the handicapper will be kind.

In the mile novice race the Godolphin favourite Silver Peak was under a ride for most of the way before getting into his stride and winning well. It didn't look a great contest and I am not sure what to make of him.

In the fourth two-year-old race of the afternoon Defence Minister showed a really nice turn of foot in the six-furlong novice race to follow up a Newmarket victory. He could head to the Middle Park where we will get a better idea of his ability. The Haggas runner here Maelstrom looked a nice sort but was far from fully fit and was never out of last place.

Friday September 6th Haydock

Just the two races for the younger brigade today but a useful performance from First Instinct in the six-furlong filly's novice giving the penalty away. Coming from off the pace she didn't have the clearest of runs but once in the clear showed a fair turn of pace to get up by a short head. She can step up to graded races. Runner up Stormy Impact looked the winner for most of the race but for the third time in three runs finished second the last twice at short odds.

I backed First Instinct at 9/1 but couldn't fancy the second Haggas/ Marquand winner Bintjeddah in the mile filly's novice after her underwhelming first effort. It was probably not a great race and another runner up in Blessed Star who had managed to place second in all three of his runs.

Away from the two-year-olds Knight Templar ran out a good winner of the mile six handicap off 66. The stable has jumpers so maybe he will go that way in the winter. Third home Easy Dancer looked just the type to go jumping if he doesn't get sold to go abroad.

Saturday September 7th Haydock

As small a crowd as I can recall for Sprint Cup Day. A big field for the sprint and it is not hard to think that the draw made the difference. The first five home had five of the six lowest official ratings and were all drawn low. Not very satisfactory. Elite Status ran best of those drawn high looking like taking a hand in the finish but stopped quickly a furlong out. Favourite Inisherin was beaten at half way and has not gone on from his Commonwealth Cup win.

The Group 3 Superior Mile looked a wide-open affair and Hollywood Boy finally won another race after a whole host of placed efforts since his Chesham win. Runner up Prague was well backed dropping back to a mile. He had been prominent in all his other runs but was held up here which didn't seem a good idea as he finished well and probably should have won.

The two mile six handicaps were both run at a fast pace and in the three-year-old race Master Builder came from a mile back as the leaders fell in a heap two out. Runner up Contacto is a super looking beast and after three months off before this he should find a good race by seasons end.

The Old Borough Cup was Helen Goodwill's competition race of the week. I always put exactas on my selections and didn't even have to shout them home as Epic Poet and Waxing Gibbous had things to themselves from a long way out. Considering they were second and third favourites the £45.50 dividend seemed more than fair.

Just the one two-year-old race today in the listed Ascendent Stakes over a mile. All eight runners were winners and they were mostly a decent looking bunch. Luther quickened up well a furlong out after travelling well and looked useful. It looked a step up from his previous outing and he might improve again at three and there have been some good winners of this race. Runner up Qilin Queen came from a long way back for second but favourite Age Of Gold ran no sort of race.

Thursday September 12th Doncaster

I used to be a regular at Doncaster but after the building of the new grandstand the viewing became so poor visits dwindled. At least for the flat there is a clear view for the straight but for the Park Hill they disappeared behind the marquees in the centre of the course on leaving the stalls and only reappeared entering the straight.

A strange card with three nurseries but the main races were the two Group 2's for fillies. The Park Hill was a bit of a substandard contest with only last year's winner Sumo Sam having won at this level and she had been right out of form since. Winner Nakheel beaten in three listed contests seemed to relish the step up in trip in a race run at a good pace. Runner up Night Sparkle came to win the race but four second places this season seems to tell a story and she found little close home. Never the less she has improved this season and I doubt she will be back over hurdles. Third home Grateful appeared not to get home.

In the May Hill Desert Flower ran out a good winner in a race run slowly early on where they quickened up from half way. She is a big sort and will no doubt try a Group 1 before the season is out and should stay further next year. The runner up January followed the winner throughout and was always the same distance behind. She appears to be down the pecking order at Ballydoyle and Ryan Moore rode her stable mate. Her closeness to the winner might hold the form down. The third Flight was nearer the winner than in their maiden.

The most valuable race was the Weatherby's Sales race. A nose separated Hallasan for Godolphin and Camille Pissarro for Coolmore and neither would be among the stable's superstars.

The better of the nurseries was the seven-furlong race where Yarough made all under Tom Marquand and fought off two challengers close home. He came here from the Acomb which looked a good race and the 8/1 on offer looked generous.

NEWTON ABBOT NOTES – COMPILED BY GRAHAM ASHFORD

Newton Abbot August 22nd

A good crowd always good to see. First on the card a maiden hurdle going to Sirekoff on his first run for David Pipe Well supported in the market and just holding on. Massive shock in the 2nd - Barry Brennan's Great D'Ange winning easily at odds of 80/1. Best ride of the day goes to Sean Bowen in the 3rd - Anthony Charlton Sergant given a smart ride and winning easily. Not to be this time for Clearance in the next but ran in usual sound race. Odds on shot Matterhorn at the 3rd in the 4th later pulled up the winner Fringill Dike jumping well. My own selection for the 5th Colonel Lesley beaten a neck by Evan Williams' Melton Mossy. Loudest cheer of the day going to Glynn the Owners Group horse cheered all the way to line landing some tasty bets. The last on the card went to David Pipe Via Dante - tongue strap fitted for the 1st time making a big difference Superbly ridden by Jack Tudor giving him a double on the card A jockey I have a lot of time for. Paul Nicholls had 3 runners all running disappointing in their races.

Newton Abbot. August 31st



1st race a Novice Hurdle. My own Owners Group horse Brave Knight completed the hat-trick(just) but I never had any worries.

On to the Brush Hurdle final at Worcester at the end of September or a nice handicap at Chepstow in October. A big thank to Newton Abbot for supplying the Champagne for the Owners Group celebration Hidalgo De L'isle was given a patient ride by Brian Hughes to win nicely in the 2nd Dan Skelton's Beat Box continues to improve with every race and won the 3rd. Should land the hat-trick next time and might run up a sequence Clearance ran his usual sound race in the 4th finishing fourth to Lallygag. Nice safe round of jumping by Kauto the King in the next saw him just get home. Getting plenty of vocal from myself and others Danny won the last easily given a super ride from Taylor Fisher won with plenty in hand and should follow up next time. Another super punting meeting.

Newton Abbot September 9th

Disappointing turn out for the 1st a 3-runner affair. Those that took advantage of the 7/2 overnight for Investment Manager never had any worries. It was no surprise to see Beat Box get the hat-trick in the 2nd
- this Skelton gelding is improving rapidly and must be followed next time .

Bit of a turn up in the 3rd Jimmy Frost Firefly Lane going on to win. Best in the paddock by a long way was the Camelot gelding Torrent winning very snugly at 7/2 landing some heavy bets in the 4th Joe Tizzard found a nice race for Ryder's Rock the mare gaining her first win in a weak race. The bumper, the race I had been waiting for all afternoon, didn't disappoint. The Soldier of Fortune gelding Alan De Banks getting the better of the favourite late on landing some heavy wagers. This gelding is going to make a super chaser and is one for the notebooks. Special mention to Sam Twiston-Davies who despite having 3 seconds on the card was up for a chat and photo. A super guy.

Newton Abbot September 20th

The first looked a match on paper the Skelton's mare Shakeytailfeather despite the drift in market won nicely. The gamble of the meeting Kitty Foyle just landed the 2nd 16/1 overnight to 4/1 S.P. Trainer Daisy Hutchins very capable given the right tackle!

More shouts and cheering when the Owners Group horse Glynn landed the hat-trick in the 3rd given a super tactical ride by Sam Twiston-Davies.



The 4th won by Danny who was sure to follow up after his last win. Taylor Fisher executing his orders to the letter. S.P 13/2 but plenty of 8/1 some very hefty wagers landed. The trainer Joe Tickle local trainer from Tiverton is a trainer to keep an eye on. The mare Karenelle landed the 5th in a close finish.

The Hobbs stable were very confident in the 6th - the chestnut mare Wonderful Eagle won with a lot in hand should follow up next time. The last, well what can I say Hold the Fort landing the 4 timer the handicapper can't get to grip with the horse. The super James Best who knows him so well was delighted

5/1 was an absolute gift. A fantastic punting meeting but on a sad note only 3 more meetings left!

Tote/Racing Post Ten to Follow - by Gordon Armistead

By the next edition of Racin' the core of the 2024/25 jump season will be in full swing. Everyone will have got their own list of horses to follow for the season and many of the competitions will have closed their entries. They should be a bit of fun but at the pointy end they can be a bit stressful.

Boxing Day 1994 and the King George. Barton Bank is well clear coming to the last and only has to jump it. Had he done so it would have put me into the lead in the Racing Post ten to follow competition. I remember not being too pleased but probably not being as upset as Barton Bank's trainer David Nicholson who got into trouble for punching a photographer who tried to take a picture of his reaction. After that I faded from contention quickly.

I have been entering the competition ever since it started in the old Pacemaker magazine many moons ago. It was then taken over by the Tote and Racing Post. When Betfred bought the Tote and were not interested with pool betting the competition went by the board.

The new owners of the Tote are doing a good job in reviving pool betting and resurrected the competition three or four years ago.

So, thirty years after my last flirtation with the top of the table last season was a real emotional ride right until the last day.

For those who don't know the competition runs from Paddy Power Chase Day until Grand National Day and awards points for each winner with bonus points for certain races and the Tote returns of the winners. Not all grade 1's get the bonus points and it favours novice chasers over novice hurdlers.

It doesn't pay to ignore the obvious but you need three or four that not everyone has to make the difference. There is a list to choose from but most were easily dismissed as I didn't want any handicappers. I ended with twenty two all proven Grade 1 horses or novices I thought would be. That equated to four lists with six bankers and the other sixteen spread around. To show how competitive it is in my number one list all ten won, eight at grade 1's and it was never in the hunt.

So, the tale is about the list that went under the name of 155 and Counting list 2. Which comprised of Galopin des Champs, Constitution Hill, State Man, El Fabiolo, Pic D'Orhy, Gaelic Warrior, Jonbon, Found a Fifty, Ballyburn, and Fact to File.

The lists that had Datsallrightgino set the pace early on. Some of mine won their first outings and some didn't. Nothing to get excited about.

Things began to get interesting over the Christmas period with five on my list winning Grade 1's and Fact to File and Ballyburn winning their beginner's chase and maiden hurdle respectively. That put me into the top ten on the leaderboard and all ten looked like they had more wins in them.

January was quiet but Pic D'Orhy making a mistake at the last to finish second to Banbridge was a blow as he was in only 8% of lists. The only other runner was Jonbon when he made his horrendous mistake at Cheltenham. For the competition wins for Galopin, Constitution, State Man, Jonbon, and El Fabiolo were irrelevant as everyone had them and they were there to stop other horses picking up points. It was Pic D'Orhy and the novices for me against whatever others had as their other five.

The next big weekend was the DRF. Seven of my ten were running. The three bankers all won Galopin, State Man, and El Fabiolo but it was Ballyburn and Fact to File stepping up to Grade 1 wins that meant by the end of the weekend I had taken the lead. It was not all good news as Found a Fifty was run down after looking all over the winner at the last in the Grade 1 Irish Arkle. He was only in 2.6% of lists and would have been a big win especially as his SP was 10/1 and would have been at least that on the tote.

Sitting at Dublin Airport I got a text from the club's former leader Kevin Parr asking how I had got on. After telling him of the lead I got a text back saying there's £54K to the winner with three exclamation marks. I replied I hadn't noticed.

It was all getting a bit serious. While February was quiet, I lost the lead when Shishkin won the Denman but regained it a week later when Pic D'Orhy won the Ascot Chase. I was not bothered his rivals never really looked busy.

Cheltenham was looming but one more test to pass. You are allowed two substitutions before the festival. Usually that would not be a problem as one or two of the ten would have picked up some injury or another. I still had ten fit and well and nine were going there. I wanted to get Lossiemouth and Sir Gino in but what to drop. Leave Jonbon and State Man out because they couldn't beat El Fabiolo and Constitution Hill?

Travelling up to Catterick discussing what to do I joked that I really needed something to pick up a niggle. Not quarter of an hour later checking the Racing Post app and the news of Constitution Hill's poor gallop was reported.

So, one sub was easy and the form of the Henderson runners meant there was no way I wanted to include Sir Gino. I kept looking at Jonbon for the same reason. The substitutions had to be made by 5 o'clock on the Monday before the festival. Should I put Teahupoo in because that was a bonus race and the mares was not? No. Lossiemouth for Constitution Hill list amended at 4.55.

So, day one of the festival. I had hoped Willie would run Gaelic Warrior in the Turners and while his win in the Arkle was good news the runner up Found a Fifty would have been much better. That was his third Grade 1 runners up spot. Very painful. State Man won the Champion Hurdle and then Lossiemouth took the mares so the one off the bench did the business.

Day two and Ballyburn trotted up in the Gallaghers before Fact to File made short work of the Browns Advisory. Jonbon had been announced a no show for the Champion Chase which led to much mumbling that I should have dropped him but hindsight is great. El Fabiolo's defeat was in the end unimportant although it brought some others back into contention with Captain Guinness. Still, it was going well and a near seventy point lead.

Day three was going to be pivotal. I had no runners but needed some not to win, Top of the list was Teahupoo in the stayers and in the Ryanair Envoi Allen would be bad. Banbridge would also have not been good but I was confident the ground had gone for him.

Protektorat's win in the Ryanair I thought would be OK but a huge chunk of the lead had gone. Obviously picked by many to win the Betfair Chase he was scoring points at the other end of the season. Teahupoo never really gave me much hope apart from a small mistake two out and the lead was down to seven.

Only the Gold Cup mattered on the final day and I was not sorry to see J J Slevin fall off Fastorslow (he was in nearly 50% of the top fifty lists) as I saw him as the only danger to the favourite. Galopin duly won and we moved on.

Hopes that Gaelic Warrior would run in the Grade 1 novice chase at Fairyhouse over Easter were soon dashed and Willie would rely on Impaire et Passe in the Aintree Hurdle and not send Lossiemouth.

So, to Aintree and my ammunition was in short supply. Pic D'Orhy in the Melling and hopefully Found a Fifty in the Maghull. I went through the top fifty lists again to see what those close behind had and get an idea of any I really wanted to lose. I didn't fancy my chances much after looking with three bullets to dodge on day one.

It started badly. Sir Gino in the Anniversary Hurdle was a horse that I thought nobody would have until I looked at the opposing lists but in he went.

The Bowl was a big race. Seven runners and four of them were bad for me with Gerri Colombe really bad. He looked beaten leaving the back straight but Jack Kennedy wouldn't give up. It's not often I shout for a horse I haven't backed but Ahoy Senor got a big shout as he flew the last and went a neck up. It could have been worse if Bob Ollinger had won the Aintree Hurdle but the lead was gone and I was down in fourteenth place.

Before the Melling on the Friday it was obvious Pic D'Orhy wasn't going to win as he looked dreadful. Now I was glad I hadn't dropped Jonbon as he was there to see off Protektorat and Envoy Allen.

So, one runner left in Found a Fifty. Hopes of winning the competition had gone as the leader also had Found a Fifty but third or fourth was there for the taking if he could end his seconditis.

It was all over coming to the last with Found a Fifty cantering three parts of a length up. He jumped it fine and then in a split second he was behind and to a horse I have not been kind to over the last couple of seasons in Master Chewy. After cursing Mr. Kennedy on the Thursday, it was the opposite today. The final leaderboard was updated while I was on the train leaving the course. 932.71 points which was 25.17 points behind the winner and 1.49 from second. The 0.38 ahead of the fourth who I was very happy to beat as under the name of Mr. Henry Potter there were nearly six hundred lists.

The e-mail I received from the Head of Fantasy at the Tote congratulated me on coming with a late run on the last day to get third place.

It wasn't the £54K but as a friend said third prize money was better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick. Plenty of ifs and buts, mistakes at the last but that's just racing. I'm not sure I enjoyed the two festivals as much as usual though and it was a bit hard to focus on the betting side of both meetings.

The coming season competition might not be as straightforward. Three seasons at the top is a long time for a jumper so will Galopin start declining. Will the illness affect Constitution Hill going forward. El Fabiolo's jumping is getting worse. State Man is another who has had three seasons at the top. Teahupoo is probably only going to run the twice again so is probably only good for substitute status come next March. Ballyburn and Fact to File look lock ins but will Ballyburn go chasing? If he doesn't there are plenty of contenders for the novice chases and with the bumper horses last season being much of a muchness what about the novice hurdlers. Regents Stroll was the nicest I saw so might fit the bill. It's a few weeks to go yet so something to think about in early November.

Editors note: The competition winner was 'Trish Knows Best7' part of the entries submitted by Trish & husband Ken, with Ken passing away just a month after the competition got underway. Found a Fifty (pictured below) was the horses that won Trish the £54000 first prize!



RORY JIWANI – UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT WITH BRIAN GOODWILL

WHEN DID YOU FIRST GET INTERESTED IN HORSE RACING?

My old man managed a number of betting shops, most notably the William Hill near Leyton Orient football ground. While he's always been more of a football man - Chelsea season ticket holder nowadays - he would benefit when big punters did well. One of his regulars was "Greek Andy" who owned Peter Scudamore's last winner Sweet Duke. Through Dad, I had a passing interest in racing which grew when I took redundancy from my admin job at an investment bank in the City of London in 2002. I had decided that I wanted to get into sports media and there wasn't much else to watch during the day! I liked the odd bet and tried to get better at punting by studying form.



WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB IN SPORT?

I graduated in mathematics from the University of Bristol in 1998 but had already decided I was not going to follow that career path. I'd always been good at quizzes, especially sporting trivia, and essentially wanted to be paid to watch sport. I moved across London from East to West after Uni and wrote for my local paper, the Hammersmith and Fulham Chronicle, on the odd weekends covering Sunday League football, Fulham FC and Wasps RFC in the days they played at Loftus Road. After leaving the City in 2002, and countless rejection letters due to lack of experience, I worked as a freelance runner at TWI (now IMG) opposite the Fullers' brewery in Chiswick and started making inroads in sports TV production.

YOU LIVE IN SPAIN DO YOU STILL MAINTAIN AN INTEREST IN RACING?

My interest in racing has certainly dwindled since I moved to Spain at the start of 2017. I did try to keep up to date and had a couple of seasonal revivals - I did OK backing

better ground horses at the end of jumps seasons - but now I limit myself to only occasional big races.

YOU HAVE A WIDE KNOWLEDGE OF MANY SPORTS HOW DO YOU REGARD RACING AS A BETTING MEDIUM?

Racing is still a fine betting medium although it requires a great deal of time and effort. Everything is usually priced up correctly but, if you know what you're doing, you can still beat the bookie. That said, it's easier - and more fun, I think - to find value in other sports such as the ones I prefer to bet on like women's tennis and athletics.

YOU RECENTLY WORKED AT THE OLYMPICS. DOES THAT SPORTING EXTRAVAGANZA STILL HAVE A PLACE IN THE CALENDAR AND WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE CHANGES TO IT?

Paris was a great host city and the return of crowds really helped after the Covid-affected Tokyo Games. New sports are never going to be to everyone's tastes but that's progress. In this social media age, there were countless emotional and 'viral' moments and it remains the Greatest Show on Earth.

DID YOU ENJOY YOUR TIME WORKING IN PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR BOOKMAKERS?

I did for the most part. There are certainly worse jobs than being paid to go racing three or four times a week... but it's definitely a young person's game. I was 34 when I started with Stan James in November 2011. I'd not long become a father and the constant travel and media appearances - as well as my infamous ATR slots I was also on Talk Sport every weeknight - soon took a toll. After Cheltenham 2014, the thought of doing another flat season really didn't appeal. I stayed on for a while before unsuccessfully pursuing other ventures in racing and then returning to TV production.

WHAT CHANGES CAN BE MADE IN RACING FOR IT TO MAINTAIN RELEVANT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS?

It's hard for most sports to remain "relevant" when football is absolutely everywhere. And racing doesn't lend itself particularly well to this age of instant gratification; a 20 second YouTube video of City of Troy in action won't really do him justice whereas 20 seconds of skills from Kylian Mbappe will attract clicks aplenty.

Having been more of a jumps fan, it's disappointing to see a small number of owners and trainers dominate. The flat has long had a handful of big owners but it's been sad to see jumps racing go much the same way in the last decade. That obviously puts off those trying to enter the game through ownership and betting affordability checks don't help either. Far sharper minds than mine have wrestled with this question... I'm not especially hopeful for racing's future and - like most things - it's 'evolve or die'. Put it this way, I'm old enough to remember watching Scurlogue Champ on Sports night.

ANY MEMORABLE DAYS YOURSELF AS A PUNTER?

A few. In racing, it would have to be Cole Harden winning the 2015 World Hurdle. I had tipped him up at Festival previews at 33/1 as he was the wrong price on quick ground. The ground dried up and I was so confident that I had him in combination forecasts and tricasts with the two Paul Nicholls-trained market leaders Saphir Du Rheu and Zarkandar who finished second and third respectively. I had some friends who had horses with the winning trainer, Warren Greatrex, so that was a fair old night.

I've enjoyed some nice tennis wins down the years, the biggest at the 2013 French Open. Back then, women's tennis was far less competitive than it is now and you could pick out one-sided matches in the early rounds without too much trouble. I had multiples across five matches for first set 6-0, 6-1 set scores with three finishing 6-0 and two 6-1 which netted several thousand pounds. I remember having a couple of beers with one of the Coral tennis traders not long afterwards (I'd like to think I paid!). The French Open has often been kind to me and, in 2021, I picked out Barbora Krejcikova at 175/1 to win the title.

WHAT DO YOU DO NOW?

I moved to Madrid in 2017 to work for Olympic Channel as a freelance video producer. Their output is predominately written these days, but I still work for them as a writer or news editor (supervising writers and video producers and placing pieces on the Olympics.com website). I also commentate for the channel on various sports (over 20 and counting) and was lucky enough to work as a world feed commentator for Olympic Broadcasting Services at Paris 2024. Away from Olympic stuff, I appear on a weekly women's tennis podcast - Betting Weekly WTA - for the American bookmaker BetRivers.com, and do other bits of writing, tipping and sports media production. I'm something of a jack of all trades, and probably the second part of that phrase too.

Editors Note: Not sure who Scurlogue Champ was? Here is a You Tube link – well worth a look!
<https://youtu.be/-BVFpsR5Feo>

Next Racin' Deadline is Friday 22nd November

Go Racing In Yorkshire Update By Charlotte Russell

September saw another Yorkshire festival, as the four-day Betfred St Leger Festival took place at Doncaster.

Starting with Ladies' Day, there was a superb crowd and some great racing. The racecourse also paid tribute to legendary journalist Howard Wright, by renaming the press room as the Howard Wright Press Room.

The tributes continued into Friday with the running of the Betfred Howard Wright Doncaster Cup Stakes. The Group 2 race, part of the British Champions Series was won by Sweet William, trained by John & Thady Gosden and owned and bred by Normandie Stud, who also bred Gregory, who finished fifth in the race.

The final Classic of the season produced an incredibly close finish with only a neck and a nose splitting the first three – see photo on next page. Jan Brueghel landed the spoils for Aiden O'Brien and was given a perfectly timed ride by Sean Levey, who spent some time in Yorkshire when he was previously attached to the David O'Meara yard.

Sunday was a very special day which saw Graham Lee making his first visit to a racecourse since his life changing accident back in November. The Graham Lee Vickers Bet Leger Legends race raised over £70,000 for the Injured Jockeys Fund and the National Horseracing College. It was won for a third time by Sammy Jo Bell, who partnered Richard Fahey's Hartswood. Hartswood's only win this season so far, came in the Macmillan Ride of Their Lives charity race at York back in June.

Go Racing In Yorkshire Future Stars Apprentice Series

With only three races remaining, William Pyle retains a healthy lead in the Go Racing In Yorkshire Future Stars Apprentice Series, supported by White Rose Saddlery. This is despite missing the last two renewals due to suffering a broken wrist, having been unseated from Cherry Tree Dawn at Beverley, after winning the opening race at the meeting aboard the Philip Kirby trained Lady Bouquet, which gave him his third consecutive win in the series.



Phil Kirby has now trained the last three winners in the series as Gastronomy took the Redcar round under Rhys Elliott, during the Go Racing In Yorkshire Summer Festival, and Calafrio won the latest race in the series at Thirsk for Brandon Wilkie.

Calafrio wins the Vickers Bet goracing.co.uk Future Stars Apprentice Classified Stakes for trainer Phil Kirby, ridden by Brandon Wilkie.

The next race takes place at York on Friday 11th October. Race reports and the full list of

standings can be found on our [website](#).
Ladies Days

All the ladies' days have now taken place across Yorkshire. Since the middle of May, ladies and gents have been donning their finery and entering the best dressed competitions and with some fantastic prizes on offer, why wouldn't you? The final judging is now taking place on our website, so head over and [vote](#) for your favourite outfit.



JENNIFER BURGESS – LIFE MEMBER OF NMRC

NMRC was advised on Sept 24th that Jennifer Burgess, a lifetime club member, had passed away.

Jennifer loved racing and she and husband, Martin Burgess, had many friends in the racing club and both were long time members at Haydock Park as well as regulars at Bangor On Dee and Ludlow. Not to mention annual trips to Cheltenham in March and both would be present at most club preview nights and stable visits.

Son Andrew is now making arrangements for her funeral. Although he does not yet have a date, the service will take place at the Southern Cemetery in Manchester and the reception will be held at the Chorlton Golf Club.

If anybody would like to attend, please let Andrew know. It would mean a lot to Andrew to see some of Mum and Dad's friends there.

Andrew Burgess ahburgess2@yahoo.co.uk

SUSAN CORBETT STABLE VISIT – SATURDAY 12TH OCTOBER – FOLLOWED BY RACING AT HEXHAM

NMRC's final stable visit of 2024 takes us to the Northumberland stable of Susan Corbett. Robert Whitelock (Hexham) has also kindly agreed to share details of this event with Hexham members.

The stable is located at Otterburn and following the visit the plan is for those on the visit (who want to) go racing at Hexham (about 25 miles away).

The visit will start mid-morning (time tbc) and we shall be away in good time to arrive at Hexham well before the scheduled first race at 1.55pm

Girsonfield was established in 1999 by Susan and Frank Corbett with the ambition of creating an affordable thoroughbred stud farm for Northern breeders. From these origins Girsonfield has grown from a stud to a competitive racing yard. The team at Girsonfield retain a family orientated and professional perspective to achieve the full potential of every horse in our care.

As usual, we will collect small donations from adults on the stable visit so we can pass onto the stable staff on the day as a small 'thank you'. Accompanied children are also welcome although please bear in mind that horses can be unpredictable at times and ensure all requests from the stable staff are followed for your own safety.

Those who book for the trip will be sent confirmation of arrival time and directions etc around seven days before the visit.

If interested please contact Phil Evans via e mail at info@northernracingclub.com to reserve your place



2024/25 NATIONAL HUNT 'SATNAPS PLUS' CHALLENGE

The winter NH tipping challenge is back for another year! We will again be running over 21 dates (split into three rounds of seven weeks each) covering the main jumps season in the UK and finishing on Scottish Grand National Day in 2025. Generally entries will take place on Saturdays but in late December I will add a Friday date so we can include the Welsh Grand National There will be no competition on December 28th & 4th January to allow us to include all three UK Grand National dates this time.

This means that we shall be starting on 16th November this year with the big jumps meeting at Cheltenham that weekend. The final day will be 12th April when Ayr hosts the Scottish Grand National.

As last winter, entrants will need to make **TWO** selections on each date. **Selection one** is the 'nap' and will have a notional 2pts win staked on any runner at a UK/Irish jumps meeting. **Selection two** is on the feature handicap race of the day and will have a notional 1pt each way staked. (The feature handicap race will be confirmed via e-mail on a weekly basis).

All entries will be scored based upon Tote returns with a cap on the maximum points per selection set at 30 pts – or 60pts per entry date.

If entrants fail to enter on any date they will be allocated a 'default selection' per this **NEW** rule. Entrants must now select a number between 1-36 before the competition starts which will be used to determine the 'default' selections based on the racecard numbers allocated on the day. A fuller explanation will be included in this year's revised rules. Similarly, default rules will apply for any non-runners.

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

The aim of the competition is quite simple – select your nap and feature handicap race picks each Saturday* and if it wins (or placed for the feature handicap race) your points are based on the 'Tote' prices declared.

Weekly selections can be registered by phone, text or e mail. This year the deadline for all methods of entry will again be 1pm – however due to the new default selection rules this will now be strictly applied.

Full rules will be supplied to all 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.

You can also enter 'online' by e mailing info@northernracingclub.com and sending your entry fee via direct bank payment (bank details are the same as in previous years but can be supplied if required).

✂.....

SATURDAY NAPS+ NATIONAL HUNT CHALLENGE (2024-25) ENTRY FORM

Please enter me in this winter's 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 Racin' Magazine.

NAME(S).....

ADDRESS.....

.....

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

DEFAULT SELECTION NUMBER CHOSEN (BETWEEN 1-36).....

FAREWELL TO RAY SQUIRE – A TRUE CLUB STALWART

By Phil Evans

Ray Squire passed away in August 2024. He was a lifelong member of NMRC and served on the club committee for over 35 years.

Thinking back to when I first joined this racing club, I think Ray was the first person I met in the mid 1980's. In those days he would be seen at Haydock Park on race days selling racecards from a booth but would also be sharing club membership forms to potential new members and always happy to chat with existing members in between selling the race cards! If it was a Saturday Ray would usually get away sharpish after the first race as he would try and get to Gigg Lane to watch his beloved Bury FC or sometimes get to a game at Old Trafford if Bury were playing away!

When I eventually joined the NMRC committee (in those days North West Racing Club) I got to know Ray much better and despite him being a red and me being a blue we got on very well and would always love to chat about racing and football – the latter was always in a fair and balanced way, whoever had won!

Over the years Ray undertook various duties for the club being the membership secretary for many years and also organising the members annual dinners (together with his first wife Viv) in the days when these were well supported. If a job needed doing Ray would be the first to put his hand up to volunteer! He enjoyed the club preview nights and stable visits and had the odd share in horses along the way.



Ray was a huge fan of the Breeders Cup and would attend whenever he could and usually take in a trip to Las Vegas as well.

Ray retired from the club committee in 2018 to look after his wife Viv who had dementia and passed away later that year.

Outside racing and football Ray was also an avid bridge player and helped run a bridge club in Bury. It was there that he met his second wife Kath who was also a keen bridge player. Eventually they decided to get married but as Covid-19 was rife at the time their planned reception had to be cancelled!

Both Ray and Kath remained active club members and would love to take part in the various tipping challenges until late 2022 when Ray was also diagnosed with dementia, which got progressively worse, and he spent his last few months in a care home.

Before the illness took a firm grip Ray was still an avid racing fan and here he is just a few years ago watching Royal Ascot on TV – hence the hat!

Outside of his leisure activities Ray was a long serving fireman until he had to retire due to a work-related injury. It

was therefore fitting that he was given a 'fireman's funeral' on 2nd September. Ray was given a huge send off with friends and family joined by numerous fire service colleagues as well as what seemed to be the entire Bury Atheneum bridge club membership.

After leaving the service at Radcliffe Crematorium, a man walking his dog in the grounds came over and asked me whose funeral it was as he must have been very famous as he had never seen so many people there. Well Ray may not have been 'famous' like a TV celebrity but when you look for synonyms of the word 'famous' these fit the bill for me; acclaimed · brilliant · distinguished · eminent · excellent · glorious · grand · great, honoured, illustrious, important, influential. It was a pleasure knowing you Ray. R.I.P.

CARTMEL REFLECTIONS 2024

Hats off to *City Derby* (pictured below with connections) who managed four wins and a second place out of five runs at Cartmel this season. Not far behind was *Tommie Beau* with three wins and a second place. Other horses that managed two wins included *Calevade*, *Cuzco Du Mathan* and *Ilikedthewayurthinkin*.



Top trainer was Ben Haslam (6 wins) with Lizzie Quinlan 2nd (5 wins) with those on 4 wins including Seamus Mullins, Dianne Sayer, Jimmy Moffatt and Sam England.

Sean Quinlan was top jockey on 9 wins being well in front of joint runners up on 5 wins – Richie McLernon & Sean Bowen. Danny McMenantmin & Jonathan England were next best on 4 wins. Jonathan's brother, David, retired after his ride on *Ruler Of The River* at the May meeting – albeit he did take a ride in the 'Legends' race at Doncaster in September where he finished 5th. Whilst David's career had plateaued in recent years he did have a strong

surge of winners between 2006-2009.

Charlotte Jones (the Queen of Cartmel) had a quiet year with only two winners at the track although she did manage to ride out her allowance this year. Nearly all of her rides are for the local Moffatt stable, which also had a quiet year by their own standards, and without the 3lbs riding allowance and few outside riding opportunities it will be interesting to see how long she will keep riding, having also set up a local gin distillery!

Another course legend in recent years has been *Tonto's Spirit*. Now aged 12 the horse had a blank season with a best placed 5th spot (beaten 3l) over the summer.

Owner J P McManus sends plenty of runners to Cartmel over the summer months, usually being 'difficult horses' that are sent to Ben Haslam's yard. He managed 3 winners this season but over the last five years has managed to win 13/71 races contested with a LSP of £24.78 to a £1 stake so his runners are always worth a look. Despite all the winners I don't recall him ever being present to collect an owners prize!

The main downside this season was the very bad injury to amateur rider Alice Procter who fell when riding Uggy Uggy Uggy in the prestigious 'ladies race' on July 20th and was flown by air ambulance to Preston Hospital where she was initially in intensive care there

Procter underwent surgery to stabilise the thoracic spinal fracture and expressed her gratitude and thanks to the hospital team and well-wishers within the sport in an update from the Injured Jockeys Fund in late July.

It read: "Amateur jockey Alice Procter has now left intensive care at the Royal Preston Hospital.

"As a consequence of her fall, she sustained an injury to the spinal cord in the thoracic region which is affecting the lower half of her body. This will require further careful evaluation to guide future treatment and rehabilitation.

"Alice is extremely grateful for the skill and care of the hospital medical team and for the messages of support from her friends and colleagues across the industry. A go fund me page was set up for Procter, who rode successfully in point-to-points and worked for Keiran Burke, and has raised more than £26,000 so far.

Jo Gordon has played down the "little gesture" of donating the prize-money from her richest success of the season to help Alice Procter – pictured on next page.



Her percentage from Whitcombe Rockstar's win in the **£70,000 London Mile Series Final** at Kempton on Saturday 7th September will go towards the rehabilitation Alice who worked at winning trainer's Keiran Burke's Dorset yard.

"Alice is a huge part of the team," Gordon said on Sunday. "She's always been there leading me up, dealing with Rockstar, and it's the least I can do for her. It's going to be tough for her and it's a little gesture which will help a bit.

"If something like this happens, we all support each other. When we get on the racetrack we're competitive, but we look after each other as well. She's a tough girl – she's going to smash it."

Burke added: "Alice is still a big part of the yard. She's doing the payroll and helping with the entries.

To donate please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/alice-procter?member=36030305>

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