

Racin'



Issue 390

December 2024/January 2025

NMRC's AGM

8PM - MONDAY 27TH JANUARY

The club AGM will again be held 'online' so that members can join in wherever they live- provided there is WIFI access where you are!

To join the meeting please send a request via email to info@northernracingclub.com by 24th January 2025 and you will then be sent a link for the Zoom meeting. The sessions usually last 30 minutes so sometimes two sessions are required.

In particular members ideas for 2025 are welcome as well as feedback on existing club activities.

Members can also apply to join the NMRC committee if they want to get more involved!

EDITOR'S NOTES 'SINCE LAST TIME'

Racing's news stories since last time have largely been a bit depressing including the recent news that betting turnover on racing has fallen around 25% in the last year – unfortunately for the sport it is this betting turnover that largely keeps racing's finances afloat.

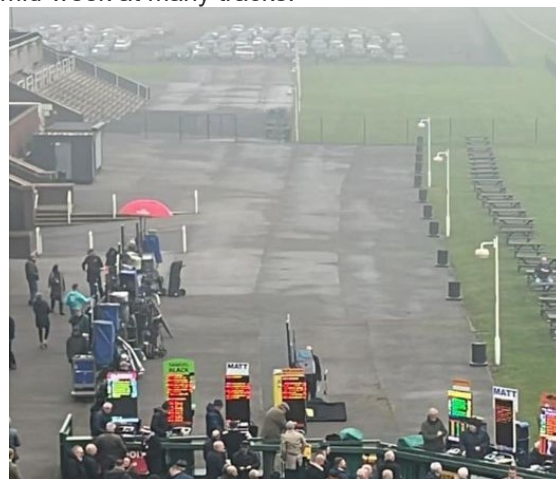
The 'big hitters' in the ring are the ones most affected by the 'affordability checks' according to press reports but online bookies rules are getting more and more intrusive for even the small stakes players and restriction of stakes online is now rife.

The 'cost of living' issues will also have an impact on all aspects of 'leisure spending' and others will be put off by smaller fields and the generally unattractive cards put on in recent months.

I doubt that the BHA's 'early morning' meetings will have boosted betting turnover either this year, indeed the opposite is more likely to be the case when figures are published.

On a personal note I have probably made double my 2023 visits to tracks this year so at least I am doing my bit to add to racing's coffers!

It is however sad to see empty stands for many mid-week fixtures and courses really do need to make it more attractive to visit 'smaller meetings' and tempt back some of the die-hard racing fans that can no longer afford the higher prices charged when only one stand is open - with cheaper stands usually closed mid-week at many tracks.



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COMPETITION NEWS

59's DRAW RESULTS UPDATE

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

October 5th – 19 – Juliet Mercer
November 2nd – 34 – Jennifer Burgess (dec' d)

The £50 prizes will be sent out 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

The competition ended in late October on 'Champions Day' at Ascot.

The honours and prizes for 2024 were as follows:-

Main competition

1st Jim Flanagan Prize £165
2nd Dave Clutterbuck Prize £90
3rd Carol Evans Prize £55

Exacta/trifecta competition

1st Jim Flanagan Prize £90

Thanks again to Helen Goodwill for running the competition again – hopefully we shall be back again on Derby Day in 2025!

SATURDAY NAPS + CHALLENGE 2024/25

We started this year's challenge on 16th November so are now 3 weeks into the 21 week 'marathon'.

Dave Bates has got off to a flyer and leads the chasing pack by over 30 points at the time of writing with the leaders as follows:

R1	Name & Entry No + Default No.
60	Dave Bates 44 - 13
30	Paul Willoughby 33 - 1
28.8	Floss Howes 36 - 9
26.7	Jack Gibson 144 - 7
24.96	Rob McDermott 28 - 3
23.5	Jim Flanagan 79 - 23
22.4	Carol Evans 107 - 7
22	Les Taylor 80 - 15
18.3	Michael Wheeler 89 - 6
17.3	Andy White 16 - 7
15	Darren Snowball 130-7
14.5	Simon Clark 48 - 2
14.01	Ted Halewood 02 - 1
13.5	Steve Cawley 70 - 7
12.56	Eddie Carson 97 - 18
12.2	Chris Watson 138 - 1

Saturday Naps Challenge – Past Winners

1997	Ray Squire	2011	Trevor Sidgreaves
1998	Phil Evans	2012	Gordon Armistead
1999	Kevin Parr	2013	Paul Willoughby
2000	Ken Unsworth	2014	Jim Flanagan
2001	John Barry Snr	2015	Charles Rear
2002	Paul Willoughby	2016	Rob McDermott
2003	Andy White	2017	Brian James
2004	Ted Halewood	2018	Peter Flynn
2005	Jon Barry Jr	2019	Linda Boswell
2006	Phil Evans	2020	Paul Middleton
2007	Alan Preston	2021	David Bates
2008	Alan Preston	2022	Mike Wheeler
2009	John Boswell	2023	John Boswell
2010	Mary Claydon	2024	Peter Flynn

GORDON ARMISTEAD'S RACING DIARY

September 30th – October 8th Ireland

Nine meetings in nine days at eight different courses from a base in a very nice cottage in the village of Kinnitty County Offaly.

Having kicked off with the shortest drive to Roscommon it was the two longest down to Mallow and then up to Sligo. The mile filly's maiden at Cork was won last year by Ezeliya and this year's winner Wemightakedelohway will no doubt be running in an Oaks trial come next spring. She looked very useful. Killarney gets the plaudits for the scenery but Sligo gives it a good run on a nice day with the views of Mount Belbulbin. It was students' day and they seemed a lot more engaged with the racing than the students in the UK. An all-chase card with five beginners/ novice races. Two Fred Winter winners on show and while one Jazzy Matty seems to be going to be a good chaser the other Brazil wants nothing to do with fences. Driving to Clonmel from a different direction than I had done before took us through the village of Rosegreen and past the entrance to Ballydoyle. It didn't look like a place you could just pop in and ask for a look around! After a tree fell into the parade ring at the previous meeting just missing horses and connections the tree surgeon had been busy. Several trees had been reduced to stumps with a few more in line for the same treatment. The course has a new weighing room on the way over the next year and probably not before time. On her previous run Evening's Empire had run midfield in a lady riders flat handicap under a ten-pound apprentice. Today she was no apprentice's ride as she bolted as soon as the tape went up. Up the straight she was hanging left and there was no way she was going to take the turn. Crashing through the rails she got rid of the jockey and ended in the pre parade ring. Moments later she reappeared galloping full speed back down the course on the ambulance track before hurling herself at the fence into the stable yard. After landing in a heap she was up and off again out of sight. Hopefully she was O.K.

Returning to base the Sat-Nav in its wisdom decided the quickest way was straight over the Slieve Bloom Mountains which are near Kinnitty. Not a road I would recommend in the dark and I was glad we met nothing going the other way.

Gowran is often heavy ground but it dries out very quickly. On the first day of a two-day card it was good with Met Eireann issuing an alert for severe rain overnight. The Irish weather forecasters are evidently as bad as ours and all that happened was a strong wind blew and dried out the ground leaving a host of non-runners on day two. Daryl Jacob returning from months off was dumped on the ground at the first hurdle as 4/9 shot Mr Percy tried to refuse. In the listed mares bumper Aruntothequeen left a good field spread all over the county at 25/1. Walk Away Harry won a bumper at the 2023 Punchestown Festival but after his maiden hurdle campaign found himself rated just 113. He was evidently considered by many a Charles Byrnes plot horse and was supposedly not off when beaten over thirty lengths in a Sligo handicap. Sent off 4/1 favourite here for a fifteen runner handicap he proved he is simply not interested trailing home well behind. The group of owners surrounding the trainer after the race did not look a happy bunch. His subsequent run for another trainer (reminders after fourth) was no better.

Super Sunday at Tipperary is a great card. It could be the last meeting here for eighteen months if they go ahead with the new all-weather track with a decision due soon. Non-runners in the flat races because of heavy ground and non-runners in the hurdles and bumper because it was too firm. Daddy Long Legs ran away with the graded older horse's hurdle. He looks very good on days like this but on others less so and he won't go a stride on soft ground.

We also had a strange conversation with Dermot Weld trying to work out what had won the first at Longchamp as the mini big screen was not the greatest.

The fast ground struck again on the inner track at Fairyhouse with a host of no shows. Joseph O'Brien was seemingly having winners every day but even he can't win if they don't want it. Three times second How About No was odds on for the maiden hurdle but tried his best to run out with a circuit left. Just €5 for admission here and at only one meeting did we pay more than €10.

The last day was at Galway. We had a nice chat with two American ladies before racing. They were over on holiday and had just seen there was a race meeting on that morning and had come along to see. It was their first jump meeting and they wanted some things explaining. They were regulars at flat meetings back home and were full of praise for racing at Saratoga.

I rarely lay horses but 1/9 for the Elliot novice hurdler The Enforcer was a silly price. He looked far from straight forward in the parade ring and also like he would come on for the outing. Grade 1 hurdler Buddy One made his chase debut and won nicely enough in a small field. The bumper was just bizarre. Joint favourite Rural Link who had already shown wayward tendencies jinked right through the rails slipped up and brought down the other joint favourite Ifallgoeswell. Half a mile later the third favourite Live Aid who had been hanging most of the race ran out. Time in a Bottle then went on at the bottom of the hill and promptly downed tools leaving the complete rag Reiki Revolution at 40/1 to win easily.

Thursday October 24th Ludlow

It's becoming increasingly hard to watch the races live at Ludlow as the trees and bushes of the golf course grow taller.

La Marquise third in the mare's bumper at Aintree overcame some slow jumps and nearly being taken out by a rival at the third last in the two-mile novice hurdle to just get up and win. She should improve and the runner up Kalium looks sure to win a similar contest.

Friday October 25th Cheltenham

Only one British runner in the two-mile novice chase. The race was run at a crawl with Path d'Oroux who had some decent non-winning form in handicaps long odds-on getting weight from this season's novices. I backed Jazzy Matty when he won the Fred Winter and again at Sligo on his previous run and the 9/1 against the favourite was too big. He set a funeral pace and with Path d'Oroux making one big mistake it was all to play for at the last. The favourite just had too much pace lasting home by a head. Hopefully the handicapper will not take this too literally as Jazzy Matty is rated a stone inferior and was giving eight pounds.

Valgrand ran away with the Grade 2 two-mile novice hurdle by seventeen lengths but I am not going to get carried away by the performance. He looked well revved up for this while favourite Gale Mahler looked dull in her coat and a long way off her early summer form.

After Jazzy Matty's defeat my luck changed as the in form Twiston -Davis yard took the staying amateur chase with The Newest One under a good ride from Toby McCain- Mitchell at 14/1. I also backed Impero in the conditional jockey's handicap hurdle with Danny Gilligan who wouldn't be eligible for these races in Ireland always in the right place in the race.

The two four novice hurdle had a couple of above average runners in Potters Charm and Minnella Sixo. The former had too much speed from the last but both certainly have futures.

Saturday October 26th Cheltenham

No one seemed to want Senior Chief except me before the three-mile one staying chase so I managed to get 14/1 to complete a good start to the main part of the season. He looked thrown in on his second to Minella Cocooner so may still have some wiggle room when reassessed. Runner up stable mate The Short Go has been a disappointing sort and the step up in trip probably helped.

Four out of four on the afternoon for the Irish as The Wallpark took the Pertemps qualifier. He will evidently go straight to the final having also missed last winter because he doesn't want it too soft.

It was hotter today than many days in the summer and the sun ruined what looked a good renewal of the four-year-old condition race with Givemefive outpacing his rivals.

The bumper can sometimes throw up a good winner such as I Am Maximus in 2020 but it looked a moderate renewal this time around.

Sunday October 27th Aintree

The sun stayed hidden today but the card was a very modest affair. The McCains had Minella Drama ready for the Old Roan and he made all. Hitman came to challenge going to the last but as always when it got hard he was happy in second. After two dreadful seasonal debuts in the Charlie Hall they seemed keen to anchor Ahoy Senor in last place and he stayed on from two out. This caught the eye of the stewards but it seemed a case of the others slowing and he was just plodding on. He is a hard horse to place. Stage Star didn't try to lead and found little. He probably needed the run but was a bit disappointing.

Copperhead was once 6/1 for an RSA with a rating of 155. He fell there and it all just went downhill. Four and a half years later he won his third on the bounce in the veterans off 122 very easily.

The mares bumper looked a decent race and the first four home could all be above average.

Saturday November 2nd Wetherby

Big race wins have been few and far between for Brian Hughes so it was good to see him take the Charlie Hall on The Real Whacker. The horse had a poor season – in line with the stable in general- last season but this was a step back up even if it was still a long way off making him a Gold Cup challenger. Runner up Bravemansgame looked fit for this and less wound up than he can be. He just doesn't want to battle anymore and just stayed on at his own pace. The closeness of the admirable Sam Brown in third place shows the level of the form. The two Irish challengers Conflated and French Dynamite both ran poorly.

I don't usually like ex Gigginstown horses as they have usually been running in staying chases for four or five seasons. Beacon Edge never fell into that regime as even though he won a Grade 1 chase he never took properly to fences. He was never at his best at three miles either but the West Yorkshire Hurdle cut up badly and he had too much speed for staying chaser Twig. Beacon Edge's first run for Gigginstown was nearly six years ago when he chased home Envoy Allen who won the Grade 1 at Down Royal twenty minutes after this win.

Luccia isn't a horse I would want to take 4/9 about and a mistake at the second last finished her chance in the listed two-mile mare's hurdle. She was not looking a shoo in at that stage anyway in what ended up looking a modest contest for a listed event.

Sunday November 3rd Carlisle

Not a vintage renewal of the Colin Parker but Marble Sands turned in a likeable display and should hold his own in handicaps. Runner up Colonel Harry looked very fit for this after being a bit disappointing towards the end of last season. I thought the third Traprain Law would come on for the run and ran a good race jumping well.

The mare's listed chase over two mile four had a real mix of runners. Gallia Des Liteaux ran in the National and after making the running here at a steady pace was out speeded. El Elefante had won her one novice chase and her jumping was found out here. Both were beaten by Terresita who had won a couple around the gaffs for a rating of 125. She isn't the biggest and it will be back to handicaps for her.

Bill Joyce took the novice hurdle for the O'Neill's following up Roadlesstravelled the day before at Wetherby. Both beat very modest opponents easily and what the wins amount too will only be known after they race again.

Saturday November 9th Aintree

A decent looking field for the two-mile four novice hurdle and an eye-catching win for Mister Meggit who won with a ton in hand. It was about this time last year when I saw him win his first bumper at Carlisle and he was equally impressive that day. The ones with winning form here both ran very poorly but hopefully he will be able to step up in class.

Only four in the three-mile one novice handicap chase and two departed on route but the winner Haiti Couleurs jumped really well and should make up into a decent handicapper. He was off 125 here and looked much better than that.

A very uneventful running of the Grand Sefton and the much-improved King Turgeon took it nicely. He stays further and could be back for the Becher but the placed horses here are well exposed sorts.

Not a great field for the junior bumper which went to a son of Frankel in Cedar Creek. Frankel's stud fee was £175K when he was conceived (Its now a ridiculous £350K) and the breeder bought him back for £100K when he was offered as a yearling. They should have let him go as after another eighteen months they only got £41K when they decided he wasn't going to make it on the flat. It didn't look a great race and it will be interesting to see how he progresses.

Friday November 15th Cheltenham

Jonbon was the obvious star of the show and did the job nicely in the Shloer. There isn't anything to challenge him at two miles in the U.K.

His stable mate Hyland took the novice three-mile one chase making all after being given an easy time out in front. Runner up Resplendent Grey needs a stronger run race and will make a decent staying handicapper in time. Buddy One has now disappointed twice since his Galway win and might be better going back hurdling.

A small field in the Grade 2 novice hurdle over two miles five but it included the two winners from the last meeting, Potters Charm looked the winner from a long way out as he outstayed Valgrand who was up in trip. How this form will play out as the season goes on we will see.

I backed Tommie Beau in the cross country and was less than impressed by the jockey's lack of awareness as they came back onto the main course. Back in the pack Conflated again ran poorly and looks a horse on a rapid decline.

From the handicaps Il Va De Soi caught the eye in the conditionals two five handicap hurdle.

Saturday November 16th Cheltenham

East India Dock was an easy winner of the Triumph Hurdle Trial. The opposition was probably only ordinary and we will no more when he takes on better sorts.

A good renewal of the Paddy Power. Il Ridoto was running for the tenth time in one of these two and a half mile races here and apart from his starts of the back end of last season has been very consistent. He had come down the weights for those two moderate efforts but the handicapper will make him pay for this. At the top of the weights Protektorat ran a decent enough race before he returns to graded races. Ga Law ran a fine race in second and won't get any relief from the handicapper. Ginny's Destiny stopped very quickly and while he might have needed it he was very disappointing.

I can't remember a field for the Arkle Trial having as many as eight runners but at the end it was a one-horse race as L'Eau Du Sud trotted up. He had good hurdle form but hadn't won for the Skeltons in seven runs over two seasons. Certainly a better chaser we will see how he goes.

I saw Seo Linn when she was well beaten at Gowran and didn't expect her to win the listed bumper here and certainly not so easily. Paddy Twomey is of course a Group 1 winning trainer but I first came upon him at Punchestown in 2015. He won then with his only previous bumper winner Timing'severything ridden by Jane Mangan and the horse was promptly sold to J. P. McManus. Jockey Billy Lee's only previous National Hunt winner in the UK was also a listed win at Haydock in a novice hurdle the day Kingscliff won the Betfair Chase.

Sunday November 17th Cheltenham

With the Shloer moved to the Friday this really wasn't the greatest of cards. The top rated in the Greatwood Under Control was rated off only 137 so it was far from a top renewal of the race. A change of tactics for Burdett Road as he made all and his jumping was much better than in his juvenile days. Talk was of stepping up to Grade 1's but he was off 133 here and State Man is 169. Dysart Enos was supposedly the best handicapped hurdler in the country and while she ran her race she wasn't good enough. She will need to step up for her reported target of the Mare's Hurdle next March.

The two-mile four novice handicap chase looked a decent contest. Peaky Boy is not the biggest and his jumping looked a bit iffy at times but he is now three for three over jumps and should stay further. The nine pounds Westinthepark got for winning at Stratford looks harsh but he ran a good race in second. Primoz was a disappointment in fourth and might not have stayed while Leader of the Park will come on for the run.

The same two fought out the bumper as at the last meeting here. It looked moderate form then and no better after this.

Wednesday November 20th Warwick

Any two-day meeting seems to be called a festival nowadays and this was the Winter Festival. Not sure of the festival part but it sure felt like winter. Snow in the fields all the way down on the train until ten miles from Warwick.

This was the lesser of the two days. Ma Shantou took the two-mile five novice hurdle but maybe runner up Barlovento will prove the better long term over fences.

It's rare to see a horse like Moveit Like Minnie who can go sideways with such speed. After running out at Aintree he repeated it today and I doubt the queue will be too long to ride him in the future.

Sean Bowen produced Heard That after the last to take the two four handicap chase. While it wasn't the greatest contest he looked better than a 102 horse and will be better still if upped to three miles.

Thursday November 21st Warwick

After the previous day I didn't think this had any chance of being on but the minus 2 only produced a grass frost. Even though the course was white over as we walked up an hour before racing there were no problems. A couple of well backed newcomers in the first two maiden hurdles and both ran similar races. Livingit Du Large was 6/5 from 9/2 in the three-year-old national hunt maiden and was paddock pick. He travelled well but started making mistakes and was allowed to come home from the home turn for third. He should be alright.

Lanesborough was 4/1 from 10's in the two-mile maiden hurdle for older horses and again made mistakes after half way to finish fifth. He was taking on some decent sorts and the first two home Castle Ivers and Don't Mind If I Do were above average bumper performers and will be above average hurdlers. Although beaten eleven lengths in third Aviation will certainly find an easier race than this.

The third maiden for mare's this time over two miles three definitely had an above average winner in That's Nice. An Irish point winner bred and owned by the McManus's she is a big beast who brushed aside listed bumper winner Honky Tonk Highway without coming off the bridle. It was twenty lengths back to the third and the rest were spread all over the county.

The mare's bumper had some nice-looking sorts making their debuts but Charisma Cat gave them all weight to win for a second time. She may step up to listed class somewhere. The third and fourth Twistthenightaway and Beauty In The Park didn't really look bumper performers and should be O.K.

Saturday November 23rd Haydock

Well rain was certainly needed but not necessarily all at once. I have been racing on wetter days but not very many.

The Grade 2 two-mile Newton had six last time out winners but two were never a factor and in the home straight only two were involved. Roadlesstravelled made all and stepped up on his Wetherby win. He earned a Supreme quote but the winner of this usually ends up handicapping later in the season and he will probably follow. He should jump a fence in time. The only challenger Country Mile didn't jump well enough late on to make a proper race of it.

A really competitive field for the two-mile four handicap hurdle and again an all the way winner as Steel Ally defied top weight off 137. The Sam Thomas stable is in tremendous form and he could defy a rise in a better race. He could also go chasing as he has the physique. Runner up Beat The Bat back from a year off after looking promising ran a fine race and will win a decent handicap as should third home Knight of Allen.

The staying handicap hurdle was a really attritional race with just five of the fifteen finishing. Despite only one run in two years and drifting from 5/1 out to 22/1 Shoot First just ground it out up the straight under second top weight. He will turn nine soon but has had just the nine starts. Runner up One Big Bang was being pushed along leaving the back straight before staying on. Hitting the last two hurdles won't have helped.

Good horses usually win the two-mile four graduation chase but I am not sure if Trelawne can follow the four Grade 1 winners in the last ten years. He has not been the most straightforward in the past but did nothing wrong here. He does need soft or heavy which might limit him but will stay three miles with no problem. I got the impression Jonjo Jr. thought he could pick up the winner on Iroko anytime he wanted but when push came to shove he had given the winner too much rope. Still the horse ran a fine race. He hadn't struck me as an obvious National horse but that is evidently the target and we will see if he stays well enough. It was good to see Hillcrest back after two and a half years and he ran well enough. Hopefully he will be O K after this and will surely need three miles.

A fifth course win for Royal Pagaille in the Betfair as he outstayed Grey Dawning from the last in a real slog. We know he won't win a Gold Cup but he doesn't need to do anything else this season, A super tough animal. Grey Dawning won't be winning a Gold Cup either. He needs soft or heavy and he didn't stay here. The blinkers seemed to have enlivened Bravemansgame in the parade ring but the ground wouldn't have been to his liking. (How it was still described as just soft I have no idea.) I was disappointed in Limerick Lace who should have liked conditions. Ahoy Senor didn't like being held up again and seemed to just turn it in when he couldn't get his own way.

Wednesday November 27th Wetherby

French flat maiden winner Marche d'Aligre was backed into odds on for his jumping debut in the juvenile maiden hurdle. He trotted up against some moderate looking rivals and could well be half decent. Let It Rain won in equally easy fashion in the mare's two-mile novice hurdle. She is obviously useful but this told us little about where she will end up.

Queenofthejukebox was one of those who caught the eye in the bumper at Aintree's October meeting. She took the mares bumper here easily. Her two main rivals were given plenty to do and she had gone for home when runner up Amelia's Star was put in the race. She will stay well when she goes over hurdles.

SOUTH WEST NOTES – COMPILED BY GRAHAM ASHFORD

Exeter October 10th

First meeting of the new season and a healthy crowd. First winner on the card Sans Armour a stand out in the paddock was very heavily bet in the ring and won with the minimum of fuss.

Some poor jumping by the favourite Florencethemachine left the race to the Bowen runner A Definite Getaway in the 2nd .

Biggest cheer of the day - Opening Bid winning the Handicap Chase for local trainer Chris Down. The horse was subject of a massive gamble from all prices to 5/4 some very heavy bets landed including my own.

Star of Affinity winning the Handicap Hurdle for Joe Tizzard in the 5th .
The last two favourites Harry's Hope and In The Air both winning nicely.

Exeter October 22nd (Best Mate Chase day)

Reasonable crowd today but not a great punting card.

Maiden Hurdle first on the card with the Tizzard horse Ambion View bet from 40/1 to 14/1 just getting home. The Skelton bandwagon rolls on will Pony Soprano winning the 2nd from the Nicholls fav (Nicholls stable in poor form at this time).

Helen Nelmes Wellwillya causing a shock in the 3rd .

Poor turnout for the Best Mate but with only £8000 to the winner only to be expected. Nice to see Jane Williams horses coming in to form with Jupiter Allen winning the Best Mate from some fancied contenders.

My only bet on the card Catboy was just collared on the run-in by Sindabella in the 6th .The bumper looked a poor affair won by Gnomon.

Newton Abbot October 30th

Only 5 runners in the first Novice Hurdle Harry Fry Hymac ran out a ready winner very well supported in the ring.

The 2nd race, a H'cap Chase, saw Western General given a super patient ride by Brendan Powell to win easily.

The Skelton horse Major Fortune was a stand out in the paddock winning the 3rd (H'cap Hurdle) Betfair SP amazing 5/1.

The Skelton team followed up in the next Catch Him Derry winning without any fuss another stand out in the paddock.

Those that took the 7/1 early for Livin On Luco never had any doubts given a brilliant ride by the best 7lb claimed around Callum Pritchard

Harry Fry top and tailed the card when his Idaho Sun took the bumper(best by a long way in the paddock fit and ready). A super punting card for me and others.

Exeter November 8th

Start of the West Country weekend.



Very good crowd in attendance. Jennie Candlish Skyjack Highjack (ridden by Jonjo jnr – photo left) made all in the first and won very easily (rare runner at the track for the trainer).

Nothing much to say about the 2nd race - a 3-runner affair won by the favourite Sorceleur.

The race I was there for was the Haldon Gold Cup. Joe Tizzard's JPR ONE laid out for the race and won accordingly landing a few large bets for myself and others.

This is a proper horse and has the Festival as a target.

Jimmy Frost Asian Spice landed some nice bets for

connections in the next. Did not see the last 2 races too busy celebrating in the box!

Wincanton November 9th

Not a punting card for me but enjoyed catching up with friends.

The big race the Badger Beer was won by Sam Thomas's Al Dancer who led most of the way and stayed on well to win. A trainer who knows how to get them ready for the day.

Exeter November 18th

Not a quality card with very few runners.

Gyenyame had little trouble landing the odds(2/7) in the first - my only bet in the card



Florence the machine made all in the 2nd (only 3 runners) Freddie Gingell getting the fractions right as usual.

Another winner for Freddie (photo left) in the 3rd Kick up a Storm (5 runners - Hooray!) led at the last and won the 3rd .

Nice winner for Georgina Nicholls Chattamento despite being keen stayed on well in the 4th (5 Runners again!)

A welcome winner for Jane Williams in the 5th (4 runners) Inside Man looks like he might progress further.

Little to say about the last 2 races(4 and 3 runners)but Freddie did get his treble in the bumper.

KING GEORGE VI CHASE – COMPETITION!

The King George VI Chase is a Grade 1 National Hunt steeplechase in Great Britain which is open to horses aged four years or older. It is run at Kempton Park over a distance of about 3 miles (4,828 metres), and during its running there are eighteen fences to be jumped. The race is scheduled to take place each year on 26 December, and features as part of the course's Christmas Festival.

The event was first run in February 1937, and it was named in honour of the new British monarch, King George VI. It was only run twice before World War II, during which Kempton Park was closed for racing and used as a prisoner-of-war camp. The two pre-war runnings were each contested by four horses. The winner of the first, Southern Hero, remains the race's oldest ever winner. After the war the racecourse re-opened, and the event returned in 1947 on a new date – Boxing Day.

The King George VI Chase is now the second most prestigious chase in England, surpassed only by the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Fifteen horses have won it more than once, Desert Orchid won it four times and Kauto Star won it five times. The race is currently sponsored by the Ladbrokes Coral bookmaking firm.



Can you name the past winner of the race in post WW2 era whose jockey wore these colours? As an extra clue the horse went on to be placed in the following two renewals of the race.

We shall come up with a small prize for the winner!

To enter send your answer plus your contact details to NRMC at 53 Dalebrook Rd SALE M33 3LB or via e mail to info@northernracingclub.com

The closing date will be Saturday 25th January 2025.

POINT TO POINT NEWS - WITH ANDY WHITE

As Winter approaches, the new Point to Point Season has now started with meetings beginning in October in the south of England.

Enthusiasts in Yorkshire will have to wait until the New Year for the first meeting but the Northern Area have Sunday meetings at Hexham on Dec 1 (photo below) and at Alnwick on Dec 15 and Jan 5. I am sure that last year's top Northern Area rider Nick Orpwood will again be looking for plenty of winners.



As usual the first Yorkshire Area meeting is the well-attended Yorkshire Area Point to Point meeting at Sheriff Hutton on Sunday January 12 courtesy of Mick Easterby. The February meetings are swapped this year. After a washout last year, the York and Ainsty and the West of Yore Hunt meeting is first up on Sunday February 2 at Askham Bryan College near York. This is followed by the Sinington Hunt meeting at Duncombe Park, Helmsley on Sunday February 16, a meeting moved back two weeks from its normal early February date.

Who will run out as Yorkshires leading riders following on from last year's successful men's champion John Dawson and ladies champion Isla John. There will be plenty of other riders challenging for the top spot this year.

In the West Mercian area, the Sunday Northwest meetings are at Bangor on Dee in March and at Tabley Knutsford in April and May

Nationally, the sport will be missing Tom Ellis as his string now run under rules although wife Gina Andrews has a small number of pointers who run under her married name of Mrs Georgina Ellis.

One horse having a go under rules is Sine Nomine last year's Cheltenham Foxhunters winner. Trained by Catterick Clerk of the Course Fiona Needham who also holds a NH permit trainer Licence, the plan is to run Sine Nomine in a Listed Mares Chase at Market Rasen in late November before having a go at the Rowland Meyrick Chase at Wetherby on Boxing Day. The back up plan is to revert to pointing in the new year. The horse will continue to be ridden by John Dawson so good luck to the connections.

For more information about point to point, visit www.pointtopoint.co.uk where you can find details of meetings, entries and results and subscribe to the free "Go Pointing" Newsletter sent to your inbox every Thursday with meeting previews, reports and news. If you have never been pointing, give it a go in 2025!

Go Racing In Yorkshire Update By Charlotte Russell

Go Racing In Yorkshire Season Ticket



The Go Racing In Yorkshire Season Ticket is back on sale! The best value way to go racing, the season ticket offers;

- Grandstand & Paddock admission to all 183 fixtures at Yorkshire's nine racecourses
- 65 Weekend & Bank Holiday fixtures
- 27 Evening fixtures
- Yorkshire County Cricket Club reciprocals
- Discounted joint ticket
- Exclusive Club Days

A single ticket is £460 and a joint is £770 for two people living at the same address.

New for this year is the option to pay in instalments, either by booking through our website, www.goracing.co.uk, or by contacting Charlotte Russell on 07305 932411 or charlotte.russell@goracing.co.uk.

Throughout the year, we hold club days, where members get together in an exclusive box or bar, with a tipster to run through the card and tea and coffee, plus a bar.

There's also a friendly WhatsApp group, allowing season ticket holders to plan meet ups in advance of racedays and share their thoughts on the day's racing.

It really is the best value ticket in racing!

Racecourse Success



The team from York Racecourse after being crowned Showcase Champions

There was a strong Yorkshire contingent at the recent Racecourse Association Showcase & Awards, hosted by Musselburgh racecourse at the Signet Library in Edinburgh in November.

Four racecourses, plus Go Racing In Yorkshire were victorious in seven out of the 13 categories, with York racecourse named Showcase Champion.

Beverley started the winning ways in the Non-Raceday Event category, following their collaboration with Longcroft High School. The

racecourse welcomed GCSE students for a series of stress-busting activities in the great outdoors, while allowing these prospective racegoers to engage with the racecourse and the sport.

Go Racing In Yorkshire were up next for the Racing Together Community Award for their partnership with Yorkshire NHS Trust's, promoting the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme. The Bowel Cancer Screening team attend a racecourse each month to encourage those eligible to take the test and answer any questions.

Ripon won the Raceday Award for their Gold Medal Family Day, which capitalised on the racecourses' new fixture slot to celebrate the different sports taking place in Summer, including the Olympic games.

Pontefract won the Diversity & Inclusion award for their Autism-friendly racedays, offered at each of their fixtures, thanks to support from Future Ticketing and Autism in Racing. Pontefract have since been the first and only racecourse to be accredited by the National Autistic Society.

Racing In 2025

All the Yorkshire fixtures scheduled for 2025 are now on our website, www.goracing.co.uk and can be downloaded straight to your device, be it computer, mobile phone, tablet or laptop. Simply visit the fixtures page and click the download button for them to instantly appear in your calendar.

Jump Racing

The jump season is well and truly in full swing now, franked by a wonderful win in the bet365 Charlie Hall Chase, by the Yorkshire trained The Real Whacker. As we look ahead, there are eight jump fixtures in December with the wonderful Christmas tradition of Boxing Day at Wetherby on 26th December, with a quick return on Friday 27th, followed by Catterick on 28th December and a family day at Doncaster on Sunday 29th December. A great way to blow away the Christmas cobwebs.

Advent Calendar

Don't miss out on the opportunity to win some great prizes from the Go Racing In Yorkshire Advent Calendar this December. Keep an eye on our social channels to enter. There are some great prizes to win, from tickets to the races to racing books, EFL tickets and more!

BTRC Sweepstake Ticket

Support the BTRC Grand Sweep on The King George VI Chase. First Prize: £1,000, Second: £250, Third: £100 and any other horse drawn: £20. The draw will take place on 24th December and the race is to be run at Kempton Racecourse on 26th December.



Tickets are £1, or £10 for a book of 10 tickets. Once ordered, we will email you your tickets. (Should the race not be run, your ticket fee will become a donation to the BTRC. BTRC are licensed under the Betting, Gambling and Lotteries Act 1963 and registered with the Fund-Raising Regulator)

Price: £1 per ticket

<https://thebtrc.co.uk/btrcshop>

JOHN BRYAN TRIBUTE - BY BRIAN GOODWILL

John Bryan was the first person I contacted, when I joined what was then The North West Racing Club over 40 years ago. He was a committee member and there was an article about the club in The Lancashire Evening Telegraph. From that first phone call he became a close friend and in the mid-1980s when we lived just a few miles apart in The Ribble Valley we went racing together on many occasions.



John only left this island on a few occasions and then it was to go racing on club trips to France and Ireland.

Our trips together became less frequent when we both married and lived further apart but we met up again twenty odd years ago and as I was then working in racing I was delighted to have John as a guest in the judge's boxes around the country. I really enjoyed his company but it did come with a caveat. He was an enthusiastic racegoer and I had to remind him that when the eyes and more importantly the cameras of the racing world were focussed on the photo finish it would not be a good look for someone in the Officials Area to be shouting home "the winner".

When I retired from full time work in 2017 I kept in touch with John but by then our meeting place

was at football grounds in The North West. He was an Accrington Stanley and Clitheroe season ticket holder and what he didn't know about Non-League football was not worth knowing. He liked to keep friends informed of the scores, sometimes forgetting where they were at the time. On more than one occasion he texted me to give me the latest score at a match which I was at. Once I am fairly sure that his message which said "Goal" came through just as the ball hit the net.

While he was an infrequent racegoer in recent years he was determined to complete his full house of racecourses and he did so with a visit to Fakenham earlier this year.

He continued going to many football matches with his last game being City of Liverpool 1-1 Clitheroe on 30 September. His short illness and death later that week came as a shock. Though his final text of "I am in Preston Hospital with major breathing problems" had a Spike Milliganesque feel

John's funeral in Accrington was well attended. His son, Stephen delivered a fitting eulogy and the Clitheroe manager Jimmy Bell was among the mourners. He will be greatly missed by friends and family and I shall always remember him as a close friend and my first point of contact at the racing club. Without his warm welcome I may not have bothered joining. Something that all of us should remember as new members join.

FELIX FRANCIS CHATS TO BRIAN GOODWILL

Your latest book, SYNDICATE, is out now. Please give a brief synopsis.

Chester Newton is a successful racehorse syndicate manager and his company, Victrix Racing, is having its best year yet. When his prized horse, Potassium, wins the world-famous Epsom Derby, Chester is set to become the next big thing in British horse racing.

But one phone call changes everything.

Someone hiding behind a voice scrambler and an untraceable burner phone is demanding he fixes a race – and they're willing to go after Chester's family if he fails to comply.

Chester's business is the only thing in his life that isn't falling apart. With his marriage on the rocks and his children growing increasingly distant, he is not willing to let someone destroy the success he's spent his life building.

Then his daughter is kidnapped and, very suddenly, it's not just his livelihood that's on the line. Now Chester must discover just how far he will go to protect his family . . . Will someone really kill his daughter to take control of the syndicates?

It is often said that sex sells. When Jilly Cooper writes equestrian themed books the pages are rife with steamy passages. Do you make a conscious decision to steer away from that or do your publishers curb any enthusiasm you may have ?

Syndicate has more sex in it than many of my novels, but my editors wanted it reduced in its raunchiness from the first draft! I know that many of my readers don't want too much explicit sex (as opposed to my friend Jilly's readers), so YES I do make a slightly conscious effort to steer away from it — but not completely!

You have successfully kept up your father's legacy. Do you have a family member who would take up the mantle when you put away your keyboard ?

I wish!! But I didn't start writing novels until I was 52 years old, so there is still time. I have 4 grandchildren who are all still very young. The eldest of them, just aged 14, loves to write stories, so who knows? Maybe she will be writing the Dick Francis Novels when I finally hang up my pen, and have popped off to join my father in the big library in the sky.

You are clearly an educator, having been a Physics Teacher for 17 years. What have you taught your readership ?

I always state that my books are not about horses, they are about people, and that none of my readers need to know anything about horses or racing to enjoy them, but they might just learn a thing or two (or even more!). In writing Syndicate, I learned so many new things I didn't know before, so I did try to give my readers some of the best bits.

Your father started his writing career with his autobiography. You have had an interesting life. Would you ever be tempted to write one ?

I think readers would rather much read my stories than about my life!! But never say never!!

Having written 18 books in 18 years you must already be in the early stages of your next novel. Are you allowed to tell us anything about it ?

I am in the early stages of book number 19. I have written two chapters so far (about 6500 words) so there is a long way to go. I feel that I am at the bottom of a very long hill (or even at the base of a very high mountain) so there is still a long climb ahead. Deadline is 1st April 2025 (who at my publishers thought that deadline date was funny!) As for what it's about — you'll have to wait and see!! But will Sid Halley be there? Maybe, or maybe not.

In PULSE the narrator, Chris Rankin, is female. Was it more difficult to write "as a woman". Did your wife offer advice ?

I loved writing Pulse. No one knew that Chris Rankin was a woman until they had read to the end of chapter 2 when she goes to see her gynaecologist — what fun! Christine not Christopher. I don't think it was more difficult to write than those with a male protagonist.

As for my wife, Debbie, she offers me advice for all my books, all the time — and occasionally I take it!

Your father was a pilot in WWII, your mother became a pilot as did you and your son. Any hairy moments in the air and when did you last fly ?

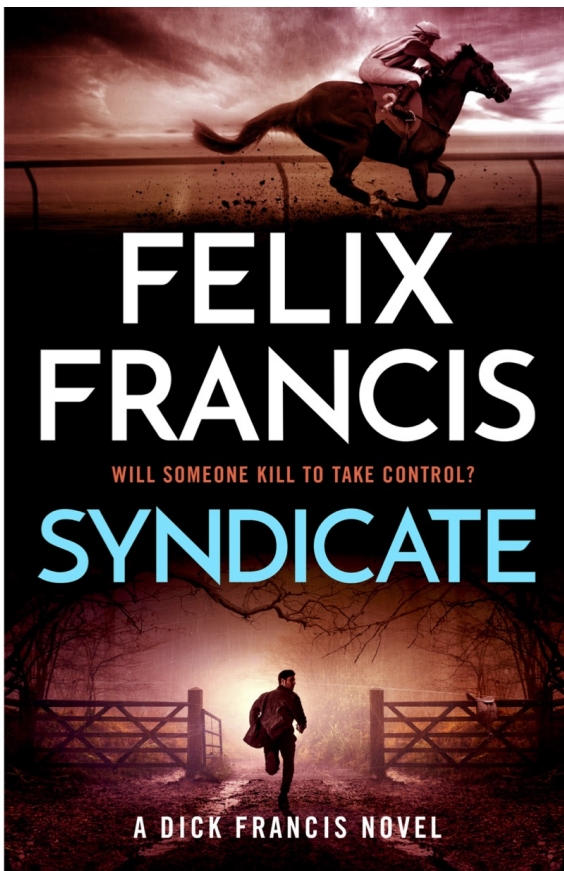
People often asked my father if he thought it was dangerous to jump over Aintree fences. He would reply that it was safer than flying Wellington Bombers over Germany during the Second World War, and at least no one was shooting at you as you cleared Becher's Brook. As for my hairy moments in the air — one or two but I don't think they come close to so many of his. I haven't flown a plane myself now for more than 20 years - but I still might! It's like riding a bike — you never forget, and I always tell the cabin crew that, if the pilots have all eaten dodgy fish for lunch, I can still land the aircraft if need be. And I've proved it often on the BA flight simulators. My son, however, flies Apache helicopters for the British Army, and that's a completely different ballgame!! Scary.

It is difficult to portray live racing action in a feature film or TV series. I recall The Racing Game from 1979/80 which had Mike Gwilym as Sid Halley. Jan Francis who featured in one episode then went onto a major role in Champions. Are there any current options for your own work?

We have a script written for the first episode of a TV series called The Turf. My fingers and toes are all crossed. Now I'll wait and see if the option is exercised and it is made. Very exciting! Watch this space.

I saw an interview where you said that you liked reading PD James and Peter James. Have you read EL James ? Or did you draw the line there ?

I knew PD James very well, and I know Peter well too. Both have written some wonderful books that I have greatly enjoyed reading. As for EL, well, of course I have read them — or some bits of them at least. Who hasn't? The whole point of writing thrillers is to thrill and EL James has certainly done that! Good on her. More power to her elbow, especially the one holding the whip!!!



GET INTO THE FESTIVE SPIRIT AT CATTERICK RACES



The team at Catterick Racecourse are busy preparing for three thrilling National Hunt fixtures that are scheduled to take place over the festive period, on Tuesday 17 December, Saturday 28 December and New Year's Day.

The festivities begin with Christmas at Catterick, when the Christmas lights will be up, and the course will welcome the choir from Le Cateau Primary School (photo left) in Catterick Garrison to sing Christmas carols for racegoers ahead of the first race.

The Injured Jockey's Fund will also be at the course with a selection of Christmas gifts and stocking fillers suitable for any racing enthusiast –

the ideal occasion for some last-minute Christmas shopping!

With seven races scheduled, the racing action on 17 December gets underway at 12.30pm, with the gates opening to the public at 10.30am. Regular racegoers to Catterick will also be delighted to learn that this will be the first meeting with the new Horseshoe Café Bar open to the public, offering a large, contemporary space for racegoers to relax and enjoy some refreshments right at the heart of the paddock.

Emma Stevenson, General Commercial Manager said: "We're looking forward to welcoming racegoers into the Horseshoe Café Bar for the first time and having the Le Cateau School Choir back at the racecourse for Christmas at Catterick. The 17th December marks the first of our Christmas fixtures and hearing the carols being sung as racegoers arrive creates such a lovely festive atmosphere!"

Next up on the calendar is the Sky Bet Christmas Jumper Day on 28 December. One of the feature meetings at the North Yorkshire racecourse, which this year falls on a Saturday. It's a race day that always proves popular with racegoers - offering the perfect opportunity to enjoy some fresh air and post-Christmas fun with friends and family!

Raceday sponsors Sky Bet have generously supported all six races on the day, with the first race due to take place at 12.10pm and the last scheduled for 3.10pm.

On 28 December, the gates will open to the public from 10.10am, and racegoers will want to arrive early, as there will be complimentary mulled wine and mince pies on offer for the first 100 people.

Anyone wearing a Christmas Jumper on the day will be given the opportunity to enter a prize draw to win a Christmas stocking full of goodies, including a voucher for two Grandstand & Paddock admission tickets to a meeting of the winner's choice at Catterick Bridge in 2025. Meanwhile, every winning horse on the day will also receive a Christmas stocking full of goodies – the horses' stockings, however, will be filled with carrots and polos!

Together with Sky Bet, the racecourse has also arranged a small Christmas gift for every member of stable staff working on the day to say thank you for all their hard work over the Christmas period.

The festive race days will culminate with racing on New Year's Day, as Catterick Racecourse hosts the first fixture of the 2025 Yorkshire racing calendar – a favourite among many racegoers and a tradition the racecourse is delighted to continue this year.

Tickets will be available to purchase at the gates at each meeting, while advanced and group booking discounts – saving racegoers up to 25% on the gate price – are available up until 48 hours prior to each race day, either online at catterickbridge.co.uk or by calling the racecourse office on 01748 811478.

Under 18's are admitted free of charge and there is a complimentary shuttle bus service from Richmond Market Place approximately one hour prior to the first race each day.

STABLE VISIT NEWS

Thanks to all who attended the October stable visit to Susan Corbett's yard – especially 3-year-old Penelope who must surely be our youngest ever guest on a stable visit (with her dad of course!).

For anyone who missed the trip and are looking for a share in a horse there are plenty of syndicates available at the yard including the following one – contact details available at <https://girsonfield.co.uk/>

More visits are planned for next Spring!



SUSAN CORBETT
GIRSONFIELD STUD & RACING

Join the New

Otterburn Racing Club!

Even if you have never been involved in racing before this is an ideal way to start off.

The club is made up of 15 like minded people all sharing an interest in owning and racing a National Hunt Horse. Susan will go to the sales at Goffs and Tattersalls in October looking for a horse for the club.

Subscription to buy in is £800.00 one off payment and then £140.00 per month. You will also get the weekly Newsletter about the yard at Girsonfield and the other horses in Susan's care.

As we keep our groups to a small number (max 15) you can be sure of getting either a free or special price ticket for the races when your horse is running. Please email or call Susan for more details.



SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL NMRC MEMBERS!



NMRC 2024 COMMITTEE

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Next Racin' Deadline is Friday 31st January