



.59's DRAW RESULTS UPDATE

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

Aug 2nd – 56 – Maureen Dawson
Sept 6th – 24 – Debbie Kirkwood

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 some of the club's running costs.

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

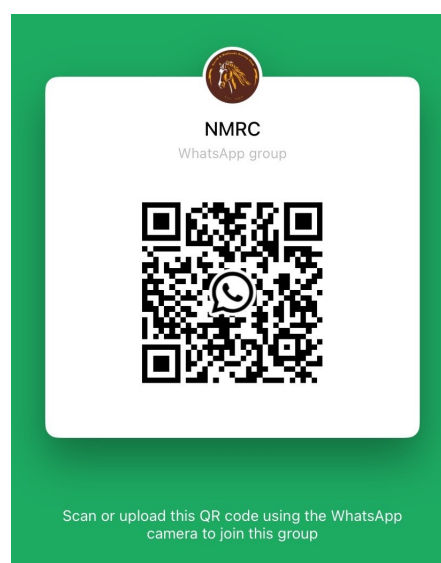
NMRC CHANGES COMING IN 2026!

There will be some significant changes to our membership requirements in 2026 as well as the way we communicate with members and share other information. Our competition arrangements will be broadly as they are now with one or two extras such as our new ITV7 and Super 6 leagues.

Once the new membership arrangements take off we will have a better understanding of the geographic locations of our members which should allow us to consider arranging some local events in 2026.

For fuller details please read the article on page 18 of this issue of Racin' Magazine.

NMRC WhatsApp Group – Not everyone uses Facebook so this group will compliment/add to the information shared there. Keith Dodd has already started adding content and you can join the group by scanning the QR code on the below:



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DAVID KAY

We are very sad to announce the death of David Kay on 31st July whilst on holiday in Turkey.

Many older racing fans in the North West will remember David, one of the founder committee members of North West Racing Club (now North & Midlands Racing Club).

His racing dinners in the North West were legendary and always well attended by NWRC members, trainers, jockeys and other racing professionals with a host of top speakers from the sport delighted to lend their support to these fundraising events with Jack Berry in particular a regular supporter. In his younger years David also arranged a series of cricket/football matches between NWRC Members and the Middleham Stable Lads which were always well received.

In more recent years David would mainly be seen as a regular at Cartmel & Carlisle but was also a member of the 'Dan Tucker' racing syndicate.

Those NMRC members who spoke to David at Cartmel in July said he was frustrated that his holiday in Turkey clashed with 'his horse' Dan Tucker running at Glorious Goodwood on 31st July - and whilst the horse failed to fire on the heavy ground we hope that David managed to see the horse run one final time.

One of the good guys in racing and someone who will be sorely missed by all that knew him.

COMPETITION NEWS

Heritage Handicaps Competition

As we reached the end of September the leaders in the main competition were:

195.95 John McDonald

161.45 Cieran Cassidy

136.9 Diane Bates

'ITV 7' 'FREE TO ENTER' COMPETITION

Congratulations to **Debbie Kirkwood** who won the September round of our new ITV7 competition. Please contact the club at info@northernracingclub.com so we can arrange your prize!

If you haven't yet joined this free to enter competition the details are as follows:

Essentially we have set up a 'mini league' which members can join via the ITV 7 website. <https://itv7.itv.com/>

All you have to do is click on the 'leagues' option on the ITV 7 home page then select 'join a league'.

The league name is NMRC and the entry code is 1Z2PX4

Members can join straight away and are eligible for our monthly prizes. Your entries are then scored via the ITV 7 website and you can track progress via the NMRC Mini League.

Initially the monthly prize will be awarded for the top entry (most winners each month then if a tie most placed horses. If still a tie then least unplaced horses will apply). The monthly prize will initially be a £10 'free entry' into any major club competition or draw.

At present we have put the additional 'entry fee' competition on hold until the numbers in the free competition increase further – further news on this and other possible spin off competitions will follow in due course

For all entrants there will also be a yearly competition with the winner receiving the 'Burgess Cup' named in memory of former life members Martin & Jennifer Burgess.



BROUGH SCOTT UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT WITH BRIAN GOODWILL

YOU FIRST WENT TO FRENCHIE NICHOLSON'S IN THE LATE 1950S. THAT MEANS YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN RACING DURING 8 DECADES. YET YOU HAVE NEVER LOST YOUR ENTHUSIASM. HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN THAT?

My father first took me racing to Brighton back in the late 1940s. I got captivated by it and I have tried to enjoy every day. We travelled down on the train and passengers were advised not to play cards with strangers, that took my fancy! Dad was determined to show me Gordon Richards riding a winner and also Denis Compton hitting a boundary at Lord's and he did both of those things for me.

I am 82 and see no point in being pessimistic.

YOU WERE VERY MUCH INVOLVED IN THE START UP OF THE RACING POST. HOW WAS THAT?

I first met Sheikh Mohammed when I interviewed him before his first runner in The Derby. That must have helped develop a trust.

There were a few options when it came to launching The Racing Post. I was flown out to Dubai for a meeting about something completely different but the idea of a paper to replace the then beleaguered Robert Maxwell owned Sporting Life was born.

I am proud of what was ultimately achieved with the help of a lot of good people but the paper was out within a year of the first meeting and though there were mistakes made, especially in the early days it went on to become a very good newspaper.

CAN YOU SHARE ANY MEMORIES OF DEREK ANCIL?.

I rode out for him while I was studying at Oxford and I rode my first Sandown winner for him. Those were great days. He was very much a glass half full person and he surrounded himself with like-minded people so it was always a pleasure to be there.

IN 1997 YOU BECAME THE FIRST EVER PRESENTER OF FOOTBALL ON FIVE. THERE MUST BE SOME ADRENALIN FLOWING AT THE LAUNCH OF A NEW TV PROGRAMME. HOW WAS THAT?

That first day was an utter disaster and I got the biggest panning of my TV career. It was based in Southampton in something the size of an aircraft hangar. In it Channel 5 had a swank five course dinner with all sorts of celebs and used it to introduce viewers to all their celebrities.

I was based in an upstairs gallery along with Joe Royle and a nice ex-player whose name I have shamefully forgot. The idea was that after all the introductions we would pick up to take viewers through the England – Poland game in Warsaw and after that, by then about 11 pm there would be the double treat of another England International – a rugby one against Argentina.

There proved to be three major snags.

1. Up in the gallery the sound was deafened by the echoes of all the conversations and fork scraping down below.
2. It was a heatwave and the gallery was like a sauna. My trousers were soaked with sweat long before we went on air.
3. Someone had misunderstood the South American time difference so by the time Nigel Melville and another rugby pundit moved in we actually knew the match result. Subsequent pretence of jeopardy as we discussed things at half time above a now utterly empty hall was the least compelling as well as most rightly rubbish TV I have ever worked on. But I still love football and my daughter Sophie is the osteopath at Chelsea

YOU HAVE WRITTEN MANY BOOKS. WHICH ONE GAVE YOU THE MOST PLEASURE AND HAVE YOU ANY OTHERS IN THE PIPELINE?

I enjoyed writing all of them but am probably most proud of Churchill at the Gallop : Winston's Life in the Saddle. I wrote it in just under a year and it got nice reviews. Horses were a central part of his life but had not been written about by any biographer in detail before. I had access all of his letters. Indeed there is some wonderful writing in the book, for around 12,000 words are Churchill's own.

Among the many Churchill things most people don't know is that as a 15-year-old he lived at Banstead Manor near Newmarket home now to Frankel and from where he rode across the Heath to watch his father's Oaks winner work on The

Limekilns. He rode in a "kill or be killed" cavalry charge at Omdurman, he scored a hat trick in India's Inter Regimental Polo Cup Final and late in life became a highly successful owner breeder

JILLY COOPER WAS QUOTED AS SAYING "I IDOLISE BROUGH SCOTT". TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE HAS SHE LOOSELY BASED ANY OF HER CHARACTERS ON YOU?

Jilly was a wonderful person and I had known her since the 1970s but to my knowledge she had not based any of her characters on me. Disappointing . She didn't think me naughty enough. (Jilly died on October 5th after this article was written).

I THINK IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ANY LONG-TERM PROSPERITY IN THE SPORT THAT RACING REMAINS ON TERRESTRIAL TV. CURRENTLY WE HAVE MORE FREE TO AIR RACES THAN FOR MANY YEARS. HOW CAN THAT POSITION BE MAINTAINED?

It will only be maintained if bookmakers are allowed to advertise. If that stops who will fund it ?

CAN YOU RECALL ANY PARTICULAR FUNNY OR TOE CURLING MOMENTS ON LIVE TV?

There are many but I shall recall one from my early days on ITV. I knew the great French jockey Yves Saint-Martin and he agreed to be interviewed before his ride on Altese Royale in The 1000 Guineas. He had got the ride because Noel Murless's stable jockey Geoff Lewis had opted for the better fancied Magic Flute.

It was 1971, my first year as a broadcaster. It was a coup to get Yves to talk at short notice but unfortunately when I asked him about his chance in the race his response was in his native tongue. Then at that point, not without reason, the director started shouting very direct instructions into my earpiece. He kept saying the same thing . In the end I got it : "make him talk in EFFING FRENCH The filly made virtually all to win at 25/1. French speakers thought I was a great tipster.

OF ALL THE THINGS YOU HAVE DONE DOES ANYTHING COMPARE TO THE JOY OF SLICING THROUGH THE FIELD TO WIN THE IMPERIAL CUP AT SANDOWN IN 1968?

Nothing was sweeter than that day. He had to be held up so it will have looked good, picking off horses one by one and winning by two lengths.

I had turned professional that year and was just back from injury. My right arm was strapped but I had ridden at Wolverhampton on the Thursday then Sandown the previous day so I convinced myself it would be all right. As I have said many times I have been very lucky in life and racing, but that was a special day.

WHAT REMAINING AMBITIONS HAVE YOU GOT?

I would like to write another book but it does take so long. One hundred years ago Steve Donoghue was the highest paid sportsman in Britain. Maybe I could go back to those times.

I will continue to support charities of which I am particularly fond.

In 2021 I visited Jamie's Farm in Lewes and I have supported it ever since. Young people on the fringes of society are given the chance to learn rural skills in a five-day residential course. I have a fundraising raceday at Plumpton for the last three years and it has been a great success albeit being postponed for a month last March because Plumpton was under water!

SOUTH WEST NOTES – WITH GRAHAM ASHFORD

Newton Abbot August 21st

Race 1 Maiden Hurdle: Whatyouwaitingfor 6/4 (Twiston Davies) finally getting his head in front(s/h).The 2ndThree Pikes stumbling at the last would have been close. The 3rd horse Mr Mcloughlan has a race in him if he learns to jump. Paul Nicholls will do well to find a race for Roadshow (4th).

Race 2 H.Hurdle class 5: Quite fancied the winner here Biakal (Grace Harris) looked fit and ready and was a winner at Stratford last time . Was amazed at the Betfair SP 28.0 .This horse has a good turn of foot and can see him winning again. Stinginthisstep(Sue Gardiner) far too keen today and was a spent force by the home turn.

Race 3 H. Chase class 5: Blackacre (Evan Williams) who looked the pick of the 5 in the paddock duly obliged. This horse is improving and is on the up one to watch for future races. Had plenty left and sure to go in again next time.

Race 4 H.Hurdle Class 4: The winner Hope Rising(Jamie Snowden) given a very confident ride by Gavin Sheehan led at the last and had plenty in the locker. The longest traveller of the day Max of Stars(Ollie Pears) never got into any kind of rhythm Think this will turn out to be a good. Form race.

Race 5 H.Chase class 2: Another win here for Centra (P. Nicholls) making all in is usual fashion. Think the Handicapper will get him next time. My own bet in the race. Jet of Dreams taken off his feet in the early stages and jumped poorly finishing 3rd.

Race 6 H.Hurdle class 5: Nice winner here for the Christian Williams team Faded Fantasy stormed clear in the home straight and won with a lot in hand should follow up next time. Sue Gardiner Testflight(2nd) ran is usual race finished well and staying on.

Race 7 H.Chase class 4: Wow this on was ready in the paddock Time to Bite looked super fit for the day. Went straight to the front making all in is usual style Bryan Carver had him spot on at every fence. Limerick Leader (A.Thorpe) ran a game race but could not go with the winner.

Nice profit on the day so heading for a pastie and coffee.

Newton Abbot August 30th

Race 1 Mares M. Hurdle class 4: Nice easy win for the favourite here Manyana Blue (Dr. Newland) making all and Sam T.D. getting all the fractions right.

5/4 in a very weak race not a lot to note about the others.

Race 2 N.Hurdle class 4: Avery short one here Howth (Tom Lacey) 2/9 but made very hard work of it only just asserting close home. The mare Saratoga Lass(2nd) made Howth pull out all the stops but finished lame after the race. Nothing of note in the race from the others.

Race 3 Handicap Chase class 3: Centra (P. Nicholls) winning run came to an end here just as I thought. Breaking Cover(A.Honeyball) always had the favourite in his sights and a horse I think will go on and win a few more races. Plenty of 4/1 in the ring finished 16/5.

Race 4 Handicap Hurdle class4: A double on the card for Tom Lacey/Stan Shepard with Turpin Gold nicely produced 2 out and ran on strong all the way to the line. The 2nd Juggernaut (A.Honeyball) not sure about his attitude. My own selection in the race Gore Point (A.Honeyball) hampered by a faller mid race and never recovered.

Race 5 Handicap Hurdle class 2: Nice competitive hurdle many with chances. Queens Venture(D.Skelton) getting up right on the line to deny Luttrell Lad (T.Lacey).plenty of money in the ring for Height of Fame (K.Burke) but ran no sort of race(did not impress in the paddock).

Race 6 Handicap Chase class 5: Very easy win here for Blackacre (Evan Williams) led in the straight won very easily and should be followed a staying chaser on the improve. TestFlight (Sue Gardiner) finished tailed off hope there is nothing amiss.

Newton Abbot September 9th.

Race 1 Juv. Hurdle class 4: A short one here Lord(O.Murphy) 4/7 led in the home straight to pull away for a very easy win. The 2nd favourite Manyana Blue did her best but was no match for the winner. Lord will find it much tougher next time. Not a great form race.

Race 2 Novice Hurdle class 4: A very short one here Jack Hyde (O'Brien) 1/7 made all and always had the race under control should progress to better things. Should be a small race for the 4th Yanka Blue (A.Thorpe) she needs to go up in trip.

Race 3 C.J. Handicap Chase class 5: My strongest bet on the card Just a Memory (T.Ellis) only just getting up on the line, looked spot on in the paddock and had tightened up a good bit from her last run. I would expect her to go in again. Some poor jumps from the favourite Imperial Measure (E.Williams) did help the winner.

Race 4 Handicap Hurdle class 4: Nice winner here for the Jennie Candlish team Hostile Hotelier 3/1 always going well led in the straight for a comfortable win(very strong in the ring).

My own fancy faded Fantasy(Christian Williams) ran a respectable race but was never going to beat the winner (very weak in the ring).Jane Williams Despereaux looked badly in need of the race and was tailed off.

Race 5 Handicap Hurdle class 3: Change of luck for the Jane Williams team Inside Man 6/1 looked very well in the paddock led just before the last and should go in again. The favourite Hope Rising (Jamie Snowden) had nothing to come when challenged. Nothing of note with the others.

Race 6 Handicap Chase class 4: Jaitroploclasse 3/1 (Robbie Llewellyn) made all given a nice ride by Charlie Price. The 10/11 favourite Juggernaut (A.Honeyball) not sure he wants to win although it was his first Chase. Not a great form race.

Race 7 Bumper class 4 : Not a great deal to like about any of them in the paddock. Axel Blue 8/15 (Mickey Bowen) just did what he had to a very weak bumper. I would be surprised if anything comes out of this.

Newton Abbot September 19th

Race 1 Novice Chase class 3: Always disappointing when only 2 runners not a race for punting Art of Diplomacy completing a 5-timer led 3 out and just drew away .This horse is in very good form.

Race 2 Maiden Hurdle class 4: Really like the winner A Pai De Nom(D.Skelton) looked far from ready in the paddock and took this race with ease.

Cheltenham October meeting could be his next start definitely one for the note books. Harry Skelton rode this Passing Glance gelding with lots confidence like he was a nice horse for the future.

Race 3 M.Novice Hurdle class 4: Big price winner for the Pipe team in this one Best Night 22/1 who looked fit and ready in the paddock. This Night Wish filly could be anything. Leading at the 2nd last and staying on strongly to the line. Big mention for the 2nd La Belle Argentee (D.Skelton) who looked far from ready in the paddock and ran a super race , will be on her next time.

Race 4 Handicap Hurdle class 5: A unusual runner at the track for the Moffat team Book of Secrets who was just beaten in the closing stages by Dickens (J.Candlish) 11/8 not a lot to note about the others. Expect Dickens to return to the track for a repeat win.

Race 5 Handicap Hurdle class 3: This one was Skelton's buzzer for the day Prince Zaltar looked spot on in the paddock and duly obliged. Plenty of 3/1 available and landed some ice wagers. Led at the last hurdle and won with a ton in hand should go in again next time The Mohawk Chief needs get his jumping together.

Race 6 Handicap Chase class 5: A very short one in this Shantou Lucky (James Owen) 4/9 travelled like the winner all the way and won as he liked completing a four timer. Blackacre again ran no sort of race and has lost his way completely Poor race and James Owen should find another race for the winner he seems to be well ahead of the handicapper.

More Haydock Memories with John Boswell

I enjoyed reading Gordon Armistead's early memories of Haydock Park-I attended most of the days he mentioned and you can't beat a bit of nostalgia!

I go back even further, as I remember going from the early 1960's

One of my best days was in 1967 when Be Friendly won his 2nd Sprint Cup, he had won the 1966 race as a 2-year-old, and the following year ridden by my favourite jockey, Scobie Breasley, he got up close home to win by a neck. As an impoverished Bank Clerk, I watched it from the Silver ring betting 2 shillings a race on the Tote! The racecard cost 1shilling (5p) and of course there was no big screen. There was a Tote Double on races 3 and 5.

You selected a horse in race 3 and received a flimsy machine punched ticket. If your selection won, you took your ticket back to the Tote and exchanged it for your selection in the 5th race.

In 1968 a 3rd Sprint Cup awaited Be Friendly, but a blanket of fog hit Haydock and the meeting was called off. Unfortunately we drove all the way to Haydock, as there was no Internet or Morning Line to keep racegoers informed

At an earlier 1967 Friday night meeting I stood next to the great Gary Sobers(I must have been in Tatts that night) He was on his own, unrecognised by most people, and I still have the autographed racecard. I expect he was playing for Notts v Lancs that day, but it seems incredible that someone of his standing was able to attend without being feted by the racecourse. Perhaps they didn't know he was there?

Happy Days!

GORDON ARMISTEAD'S RACING DIARY

Monday/ Tuesday 21st/22nd July Ballinrobe

Ballinrobe Festival is a lot more than the two days racing. Starting on the 19th it ran for nine days and there was a wide variety of activities and entertainment. It included two free concerts in the town and two at the racecourse and culminated in the crowning of the Queen of the Lakes. Those lakes include Lough Corrib (the largest in the Republic) and Lough Mask which are part of the great scenery on the Connemara peninsula.

First time flying into Ireland West Airport at Knock. It was built to take pilgrims to the shrine in the village of Knock where there was a supposed vision in 1879. We went into the village for breakfast and it is a strange place. A

huge Basilica dominates the main street while the shop next door to the café where we ate had a rack outside with bottles of holy water for sale (€1 each or 6 for €5).

Two evening meetings with flat racing on the first and a hurdle card on the second and for both days there was a big crowd of all ages. The car park was full and cars were parked along the roadside for half a mile both sides of the road. Many race course managers in the UK could do worse than visit here and see how to attract a crowd. Perhaps it was having breakfast just over the road from the shrine but I had three decent priced winners on the first evening including San Salvador. I saw him win a Graded Novice Chase last September and its nearly four years since he fell at the last when leading in a graded hurdle when I was on at 14/1.

Two claiming jockeys who have caught the eye rode winners. Nicola Burns claiming seven made all on Galaxy Wonder and Robert Whearty claiming three did the same on Grizabella. Both are very good.

Biggest cheer of the night was for Buddy One in the last. Better known as a staying hurdler he is another I saw win over fences last autumn. This was just his third go on the flat in an all-aged mile and a half maiden. He took it up two out and ran on well when challenged. We came off the stands and turned right to leave but it seemed like everyone else turned left heading for the bookmakers to collect off the locally trained winner.

No winners on the hurdles day, but two of the three horses that went on to the tracker have won since and the form of some of the races has worked out very well.

It's a great place to go racing. Don't spend your last €10 before going to fly out of Knock. They charge you that amount before you get to security for the upkeep of the airport.

Saturday August 9th Curragh

Geryon was paddock pick for the seven furlong two-year-old maiden but drifted and drifted in the market. That made not a lot of difference in the race as he came through to win a shade cosily. He is a big sort who should go well in graded races. Ballydoyle had three runners with Ryan Moore on Hawk Mountain. He looked like the run would not be lost on him and he was hustled along from early on.

Ballydoyle don't usually deal in geldings so Mission Central must have been a real handful to have the cut after one run. He bolted up in the twenty-eight runner six furlong two-year-old maiden by eight lengths. A big field but they looked a moderate lot in the parade ring.

Seemingly unfancied Diamond Necklace who cost £1.7 Million as a yearling ran out a good winner of the seven furlong two-year-old fillies race for horses not placed in a stakes race. Like a lot of the Aidan O'Brien horses she will come on for the run and will surely be competitive in Group races before long. Her stable mate Minerva having her fourth run was second and looks one to avoid.

The Pheonix Sprint was a typical wide-open Group 3 six-furlong race. Bucanero Fuerte on his second run back from stud made all and had it in hand from some way out. He disappointed when stepped up in class last season so we will see how he goes. He also doesn't seem to travel well having disappointed in England.

It was a double for owner, trainer, and jockey in the Group 1 Pheonix Stakes as Power Blue made just about all to see off 1/4 shot True Love. The favourite was probably below her best but it didn't look a good Group 1.

Monday August 11th Ayr

Special Thanks was backed as if defeat was out of the question in the fillies seven-furlong maiden as she had been when beaten on debut. She looked well enough but paddock pick was Spiritoftheblues on debut. A bit outpaced in last early on Spiritoftheblues came through two out and went clear in the last half furlong for an easy win with the favourite back in fourth. The runner up had been unplaced on her two previous runs so it wasn't a strong race but the winner will stay further and could be O K.

Thursday August 14th Deauville

Arqana sales day with four races for graduates of the sales company which is situated just across the road from the course.

The first two races over 1,400 metres were for unraced two-year-olds. The twelve runner colts and geldings' race had five challengers from the UK and one from Ireland. The most expensive of the runners was Northern Champion who cost €820K (more than the rest of the field combined). I was waiting for the off when his trainer Ed Walker came and stood alongside me. I wished him good luck and he replied "God knows what's going to happen." What happened was his horse ran out a good winner from the Brian Meehan runner River Card. Just what the form is worth we won't find out until some run again.

The fillies' race was closer with Brian Meehan again being on the wrong end as his Zaravina was denied by a short head by the Richard Hughes trained Rose Ghaiyyath. There were the only two of the sixteen trained in the UK. Again the merit of the race must wait until we have more information.

Both those races had €160K in prize money while the Criterium D'ete over 1,300 metres had €260K. Four UK runners out of the fourteen and again they supplied the winner in the Ralph Beckett runner Cape Orator. He had won a maiden at Kempton from two starts and was a standout in the parade ring and returned a very nice 16.2 on

the PMU. He won by three and a half lengths and will no doubt be tried in Group races. The one horse with group form in this race was Underwriter who had been well beaten at Ascot and Goodwood and was well beaten here as well.

The final sales race was for three-year-olds over 2,000 metres and unlike the other races this had a short-priced favourite in listed winner Yellow Jersey. He ran out a very easy winner for Andre Fabre and Oisin Murphy. Second was German Group 3 winner Pompeo Dream who started at over 80/1. Best of the five from the UK was Brise Noir a 90 rated handicapper for Brian Meehan in third.

Wednesday August 20th York

The Juddmonte could have ended up being a complete farce but ended up only being a mess of a race. As Birr Castle the pacemaker built up his huge lead the other five runners barely got out of a canter until after half way. Entering the straight it looked over but Birr Castle had gone too hard in the first three furlongs and was treading water just after two out. Still only two got to him and Ombudsman quickened well when asked to win easily in the end. Delacroix just got second. The Prince of Wales, The Eclipse, and this race have all been unsatisfactory for one reason or another this season.

The Voltiguer was also run at a far from fast pace. The winner Pride of Arras had beaten one rival at Epsom and nothing at the Curragh but someone had kept the faith as he was only 12/1. The gelding operation is the obvious answer to his improvement and we will see if he maintains this form. The fourth string from Ballydoyle made the running at a pace that suited none of his stable mates who had all had time off and I imagine all will improve. My trips to Ireland last year only included two and a half flat meetings (Tipperary was a mixed card) but I managed to see Lambourn's lucky win on his debut at Killarney and I wouldn't have taken 1000/1 about him winning the Derby after that. I also saw Minnie Hauk's only defeat at Cork. Back to the Voltiguer and just about paddock pick was Carmers who plugged on for second and looks a real stayer for next season.

Last year's Acomb winner The Lion in Winter has turned into a real dodge pot this season. This year's renewal was probably just ordinary although the winner Gewan showed plenty of fight to hold off the rather one pace Italy. The favourite Distant Storm pulled too hard to get home.

Friday September 5th Haydock

Lyrics of Life had beaten Legacy Life by four lengths when they both made their debuts a month ago but the betting suggested the form would be turned around in the two-year-old mile fillies' novice. Making all Legacy life quickened two out and it was all over. She is out of a half-sister to Frankel and is certainly well above average. It will be group company next. Lyrics of Life was clear in second and should find a maiden. Fourth home Nanoscience is a big girl and should have a future probably next season.

Nothing seemed overly fancied in the other two-year-old novice for fillies over six furlongs. They went no pace and Lightning Polka showed a good turn of foot to quicken off the slow pace and win nicely. We will see what it amounts too. Third home Vencedora was about paddock pick and should improve for the outing.

Saturday September 6th Haydock

Zeus Olympios was long odds on when winning his first two races and was well supported for the Group 3 Superior Mile. You couldn't miss him in the parade ring as he is a chestnut with four white feet and he looked really well. They went a good pace and Zeus Olympios sat just behind the leaders before he went on just before the furlong pole. It wasn't the greatest Group 2 but he should be capable of stepping up in class.

The listed two-year-old Ascendent Stakes over the same trip was not run at anything like the same pace. Publish who was forecast favourite but drifted came from off the pace to take it up a furlong out and looked the winner. However he appeared to stop when he reached the lead and was easily beaten by Bow Echo who started favourite. Publish is a fine-looking beast but I wouldn't want to be backing him at a short price. Bow Echo was made second favourite for the Guineas after this but there are plenty of two-year-old races to be run before seasons end.

William Haggas took both the mile and three-quarter handicaps. Valiancy in the three-year-old race looked hard work early on in last place with cheek pieces on for the first time. He and fellow back marker Ride The Thunder did a pincer movement on the pack. Valiancy slipping up the far rail and Ride The Thunder circling the field.

Valiancy's shorter trip might have been the difference as Ride The Thunder hung back across the course. The Reverend took the Old Borough Cup on his first time at the trip and will evidently be up to two miles over hurdles come the winter when he heads to Willie Mullins.

A huge field for the Sprint Cup after big priced winners and placed horses in the previous Group 1 sprints this season. Lazzat was the hope that we would have a horse win two of the top sprints but he had been turned over at 1/2 in the Prix Maurice de Gheest and again was found wanting. Those with low draws had no chance as the first three came out of stalls 15, 19, and 16. The first four home had won just two races between them this season and the days of a dominant sprinter seem over.

Saturday September 13th Magdeburg Herrenkrug

Magdeburg is the capital of the Saxony-Anhalt state of Germany and lies on the River Elbe about 130 kilometres south west of Berlin.

During the Middle Ages it was one of Germany's most prosperous towns but in 1631 the town was stormed by the Catholic League during the thirty years war. It was a religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants and over 25,000 of Magdeburg's population were massacred.

After World War II Magdeburg became an industrial town but after reunification these industries declined and the population dropped from a prewar 350,000 to 250,000



The only person born in Magdeburg who I had heard of was tight rope walker Karl Wallenda. He performed some spectacular walks and held the world record for many years at 550 metres. He walked without a safety line which doesn't seem a good idea and in the end it wasn't. A strange sporting fact is that discus throwing which was part of the ancient Olympics was resurrected by a gymnastics teacher in Magdeburg in 1870.

The racecourse dates from 1906 and in the early days was better known for its jump races including the Kronprinzenpreis (Crown Prince Prize) which was one of the main steeplechases in Europe. The 1930's saw problems for the course and it closed for several years. In 1949 racing resumed after damage from the war was repaired. It again fell on hard times in 1990 when racing was cancelled. A new race club was formed for racing to start again in 1991 but jump racing ceased in 1992. Over the years the course has suffered flooding from the Elbe the latest being in 2013 when large parts of the city were also flooded and nearly 30,000 Magdeburgians had to evacuate their homes.

I was staying in Leipzig and it was about sixty-five minutes on the train. One of the stops along the way was in Halle where there is the third racecourse in the area which races only two days per year. From the main station in Magdeburg it was about a five-minute walk to the tram stop for tram number 6. They have a strange system here where you buy your ticket from a machine on the tram. It wasn't easy as the tram bounced along and you also had to put your name into the machine. I had gone two stops before the machine coughed up the ticket. The tram runs to stop Herrenkrug which is the end of the line and it is about five hundred metres to the course. I was there an hour and a half before the first and the place was already busy. €8 for entry plus €2 for a racecard. There was an interesting sign just before the entrance. Dogs were allowed on a leash, you were allowed to take in water bottles of half a litre, but guns were not allowed.

As I said it was busy and the course reported a crowd of about 7,000 and over €210K turned over on course on the tote. There were plenty of stands selling food at a very fair price (€4 for a bratwurst hotdog) and during the afternoon the stalls were crossing items off the menu as they sold out. By the end of the afternoon just the ice cream stall was still going which was amazing as the queue had been twenty metres long all afternoon. It was a family crowd and apart from the racing the local second division football team was there signing autographs and there was a singer who didn't stop all afternoon. Luckily you couldn't hear him outside the outdoor seating area where people were eating.

The course is right-handed about 1,700 metres around. It is pan flat with a run in from the final bend of about 400 metres. Nine races on the card from 1.30 to 5.30 with half hour gaps which kept it rolling along nicely. The

grandstand is all seated but with lots of people camping out on it I gave it a miss for most of the afternoon as the grass bank near the rails gave an excellent view of three quarters of the course. There was a thick plantation of trees along the side after the winning post and even from the grandstand that side could only be seen on the big screen.

Favourite for the first -a four runner two-year-old race -was Taromina who had finished last of seven at Cologne on his one run. He was a handful in the parade ring and going to the start. In the race he pulled far too hard and Dirty Deeds got up to win close home. That was my one winner on the afternoon but it should have been two. In the fifth Hiddensee was four lengths clear when he passed me a hundred and fifty metres out. Jockey Wladimir Panov looked around and thought he had won. He didn't actually drop his hands but wasn't very vigorous from then on and Silvestra nabbed him on the line. The winner was ridden by Thore Hammer- Hansen who rode over a hundred winners in the U.K. up to 2023 before going to Germany and becoming champion jockey last season. He has a big lead this season as well.

Race 2 was a round of the Women's Fegentri World Championship. The British rider was Teagan Padgett who had won two of the rounds at Chelmsford in June and the Curragh in August. She was on an outsider today and the race went to Hungarian rider Judit Dickinson.

Main race of the day was a sales race (for the German sales house BBAG) for three-year-olds over 2,050 metres with €37,000 in prize money. Two horses dominated the betting but they had to settle for the places as Nordstar won for the first time on his eleventh start very easily.

There was Irish form in the 1,550 metre conditions race with Diadora who was listed placed for Paddy Twomey in 2022. She returned to Germany where she was already Group placed but did not run in 2023 or 2024 and after one run this season she is obviously not as good as she was.

Only the one favourite won all afternoon with Savoya taking the 1,300-metre handicap at 1/2 helped by his two main rivals being late non-runners.

One thing that didn't seem to bother anyone was the horses passing through the crowd. After the races the horses came back to the unsaddling area straight through the enclosure without any white rails in sight.

Sunday September 14th Scheibholz Leipzig

Leipzig has been in the sports news more over the last few years thanks to RB Leipzig's rise through the ranks of German football. The former SSV Markranstadt were taken over by Red Bull in 2009 when playing in the fifth tier of the German leagues. With the backing of Red Bull's millions they made it to the top division of the Bundesliga in 2016. It's amazing what sugar and caffeine dissolved in water can do.

The city of Leipzig is Germany's eight largest with about 600,000 inhabitants and lies about 150 kilometres south west of Berlin. It grew as an important trade centre and became a centre for classical music. Richard Wagner was born in Leipzig and J.S. Bach and Felix Mendelssohn spent many years there.

In 1813 it was the site of the largest battle fought in Europe before World War 1 when the Battle of Leipzig or Battle of the Nations was fought. Napoleon Bonaparte was defeated by an alliance of Austrians, Swedes, Prussians, and Russians. To commemorate the hundred-year anniversary the biggest monument in Europe the Monument to the Battle of the Nations was built in the city. It is said to stand on the site of where Napoleon ordered the retreat of his troops.

After World War II when it was part of East Germany the city went into a decline with a large drop in the population but since reunification its economy has boomed. It was Germany's candidate for the Olympic Games in 2012 and is near the top of the best places to live in Germany. Its main station which is the largest by floor area in Europe has been voted the third best in Europe.

Scheibholz racecourse (named after the family who owned the land) dates from 1867 and lies in the south western part of the city in the Leipzig Riverside Forest. Unlike some courses the trees are kept to the surrounds of the course. The grandstand dates from 1907 but was completely overhauled and modernised between 2008 and 2012. Despite damage to the grandstand and sixteen bomb craters inside the course racing resumed after World War II as early as August 1945 thanks largely to the support of Russian commander of the city Nikolai Trufanov. May 1st is the biggest days racing of the year and in 1959 over 15,000 attended and they had twenty-one days racing that year.

By the seventies the old grandstand was looking in poor condition but the course staggered on until German reunification. Some saw the site as a good prospect for housing but in 1997 the city council resolved to keep racing in the city.

As seems the case with most German tracks the racecourse filed for bankruptcy in 2004 and a new race club was formed in 2005. After that the plans for the grandstand were put in place and there is other building work going on which has resulted in the final meeting of the year being called off.

There is no car park and all visitors are recommended to arrive by public transport or bicycle. There are normally four meetings a year (May, June September, and October). Although in a big city it had the feel of a small country track.



My hotel was right by the central station which was also the main site for the tram system which is extensive in the city. There were a variety of routes but I took tram line 14 to stop Nonnenstrasse and then it was a walk of about a kilometre through the forest. It was €12 for entry but if you wanted to go on the grandstand you had to book in advance choose your seat and pay €22. €2 got you a racecard. I decided to pay the extra but only lasted one race. The access was via steps at each end. The lower part is flat and had tables set out in small cubicles which were the equivalent of private boxes where waitresses were serving meals.

The passage to walk along the stand to the area you had your seat was behind these cubicles but you were not allowed to use it so had to squeeze along the rows where people were already seated. It was OK if you wanted to sit up there all afternoon. The view from down by the rails was fine.

At one time the course used to be dual purpose and on the inside of the flat track up the straight is the remnants of the steeple chase track. There is a wall of photos of the course over the years and one showed a plan with the chase track on it. This included a diagonal line of fences from the home turn to the top left of the track but it is unclear in which direction this crossover was ridden.

When it opened the track was 1,550 metres around but it was extended to the present 1,800 in 1932. It's right-handed mostly on the turn with the home straight being about 300 metres.

There is no room for a parade ring outside the course so as at Ludlow it is on the infield. Both areas had plenty of food and drink outlets. Another good crowd.

Just the six races on the card. There had been seven earlier in the week but the Germans will abandon a race if it doesn't get enough entries.

There was also racing at Dusseldorf today so the top jockeys were there which left Irish jockey Sean Byrne to take centre stage. Having served his apprenticeship in Germany he rode his first winner in 2020. It's not all been plain sailing having served an eight-month ban (four suspended for two years) in 2022 for "not supporting his horse enough" (as Google translated the enquiry findings) on Sexy Man in a race at Krefeld. He was also banned for three weeks earlier this season for fighting in the weighing room. That ban incidentally started immediately and he had to be replaced on his later rides that day

Anyway today he looked in a different class to the other jockeys and it was a surprise to see he had only ridden eight winners this season before today.

After being beaten in a photo by a 1/2 shot in the first he took the second race. In the fourth over 2,300 metres he sat next to last of the nine runners for most of the race. On the tight bend into the straight as most of the field ran wide he dashed up the inside and was in front well before the finish. He was much stronger in the saddle than his opponent when taking the next in a photo. Finally in the last his mount was off the bridle from early on but he still managed third. His win on Mariano in that 2,300 race was my winner of the day and paid a decent €6.00.

When I first went racing in Germany jockey Jozef Bojko rode me some winners and I was surprised to see him still riding well into his fifties. He had rides at Magdeburg without ever getting into the main action. In the second here a staying race with only four runners he jumped off in last and was soon five lengths off the back. There he stayed and even up the finishing straight the horse was still hard held off the back. It looked very bad and the stewards had him in where he said the horse kept hanging into the rails. I thought he had just gone as a jockey but in the last he came storming through to do my 7/1 chance.

One other point was that although the stables were near the end of the back straight all the horses were in the parade ring over quarter of an hour before the race. I wish that was the case over here.

Racing finished at 4.30 so there was time to go and see the Monument to the Battle of the Nations and it is amazing. It's not just the height at 91 metres but it is 70 metres in width and 80 metres in depth. There is a large reflecting pool of about 100 metres long in front of the monument with two avenues on either side. Inside there is a crypt and concerts have been held in there.

It was built by the last Kaiser of the German Empire as a symbol of German superiority but while it may look like something that could stand for centuries it has needed lots of upkeep since just after it was completed.

I liked Leipzig and there were other attractions well worth a visit. A bit more recent is the history of the communist era and the headquarters of the Stasi is well worth a visit. As well as the story of the local secret police it tells of the demonstrations before the fall of the communist government,

A visit to a couple of gas storage tanks might seem a bit strange but they have been turned into a gallery to display the works of artist Yadegar Asisi. Asisi specialises in large panoramic works and the one here The Cathedral of Monet is based on many of Monet's paintings made of Rouen Cathedral. It is a 360-degree panorama and 36 metres high. The original painting is 6 metres by 2 metres which is digitalized and then printed. I had seen one of his works before in Berlin where The Wall shows a view over the Berlin wall. The second tower shows some of his other works and smaller versions of some of the panoramas which can be seen in various cities around Europe.

Finally another total change. I like zoos and the one in Leipzig is often voted one of the best in Europe. It was only ten minutes' walk from the hotel and excellent. And finally riding around the city on the trams I kept passing all sorts of interesting buildings that looked worth exploring with a bit more time.

Friday September 26th Haydock

Poker the 4.3 million guineas yearling in the seven furlong two-year-old novice was the most interesting runner on the day. He was an O K type that would come on for the run but he was poor. He was chased along straight out of the stalls and under pressure three furlongs out. Vast improvement will be needed. The winner Gaurdman had already had two goes so is nothing out of the ordinary. The one to take from the race could be the only filly in it Ziata. She was a big price but stayed on well for fourth place.

In the six furlong two-year-old race the first two in the betting Monarch's Gold and Night Mission both looked so awful in the parade ring they had to be opposed. Previous winner Gentle George was huge at 14/1 and having led he battled back well to get up on the line to beat the odds-on Monarch's Gold.

The mile and six three-year-old handicap looked a decent race. Winner Sing us a Song looked the sort who would improve for another year and could be one to follow next season. Runner up Klassleader is a nice sort and came from last two furlongs out. He too can go on.

Saturday September 27th Haydock

Winter is coming with the cold weather gear out for the first time. Thirty-five-minute gaps are bad enough for a normal meeting on the flat on a sunny day. Today it was just a real pain and apart from at big meetings half hours should really be the norm.

The form of Lost Boys two third places had worked out well and he was well backed for the mile two-year-old maiden. The second flashy chestnut with four white feet by Night of Thunder to win at the course this September he kept on gamely after going on three out. It will probably be handicaps for him in the future. The debutante runner up for Godolphin Posetdon's Warrior kept on well but his full sister Nuit has turned into a disappointing maiden. Fourth home Golden Knight ran well on debut and should have a future, The third big priced Amo racing runner of the meeting Saxophonic (this one cost 625K guineas) was beaten at half way.

7 Days Racing in 7 Countries with Gordon Armistead

First of all this was not my idea. Going racing in seven different countries in seven days. It first came up a couple of years ago at a Cheltenham meeting while having a meal and a drink or two after racing. A group of us have

been meeting up for virtually every meeting there for over twenty-five years. It used to be more but we are now down to five, two from the north west and three from Surrey. Richard Newbury who had just finished going to all the Crystal Cup Cross Country races around Europe was looking for another project and came up with this. The first five countries are of course England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and the Republic. France was the obvious sixth and Belgium was nearer than Germany.

Deciding that was the easy bit. Planning it was a different matter. With only two courses in Northern Ireland and just three in Wales and Belgium. It also really had to be during the summer.

Quite how long Richie spent trying to find a time when the ducks were all in a row I don't know. However sometime in the spring I received an e-mail with an attached spread sheet setting out the courses, driving distances, and ferry/train timetable. He had found just the one chance in the middle of August. The Curragh, Downpatrick. Ayr. Carlisle, Ffos Las. Deauville, and Ostend.

The third member of the team was Dave Edwards who after being challenged to do so managed to attend over 200 race meetings in 2024. It was at Dave's house in Wallasey that we met up for the start of the trip and the ferry to Ireland.

I will leave most of my thoughts on the racing to the normal column. So this is how to go racing in seven countries in seven days.

Day 1

The easiest day with just a half hour drive to the course and back. The Curragh is an awful place in bad weather but today the sun was out. They struggle to get decent crowds here but it was a fair one today. This was the first of four successive Saturday cards being marketed as family days out. Hopefully it works and they can get more people attending. Not a bad card to start with featuring a Group 1. The twenty-eight in the two-year-old maiden (should have been thirty) is more than you get on an entire card at some meetings in the UK.

My one contribution towards the planning of the trip was to find a hotel in Dublin. I have about a dozen on my list of decent ones now and just pick whichever is the cheapest on the needed dates. The only problem we had was that one of our party deciding that he wouldn't use the lift got trapped on the fire escape stairs for a quarter of an hour before we found him.

Day 2

About two and a half hours from Dublin to Downpatrick. On the way we passed through the village of Clough where there was an arch over the road with a man on horseback I assume was William of Orange over a sign saying 'No Surrender'. There were also signs commemorating battles in the seventeenth century in the Williamite War. I'm all for a bit of history but...

The country was supposedly in the middle of a heat wave but the cold wind made it feel more like October. It was my second visit here but my travelling companions first and they were amazed. The ups and downs are much more pronounced seeing it for real than on TV and having a farm in the centre of the track is hardly usual. They are carrying out work on the side of the track furthest from the stands to widen it at a cost of £900,000.

This is a course where they always get a crowd and there were more bookmakers in the ring than at the Curragh. Sam Ewing was just one from seventy odd rides for the season but won the first two races. Wing Back landed a huge gamble in the two-mile handicap. After being beaten 22, 54, and 27 lengths in his last three handicaps he goes in here at 7/4. Gordon Elliot has an excellent record here but his three fancied runners were all beaten with a circuit to go.

We had word that the ferry from Belfast to Cairnryan was going to be running late so not quite the dash we expected. The weather in Scotland was even worse as it was raining heavily as we reached our excellent small hotel in Stranraer.

Day 3

There was an abnormal load making its way along the coast road up to Ayr. The numerous stops it made on some of the tight bends gave us time to watch the cormorants and other sea birds out on the rocks and to see some Grey Seals. We also passed the Turnberry golf course. Luckily a certain person had been cheating at golf on this course the previous week as his security might also have held us up. I was once moved on by presidential security outside the White House when George W wanted to walk his dog in the grounds. They didn't seem like people to argue with.

Ayr racecourse looked closed when we approached it. Nobody around and none of the entrances open. We eventually found a shed in what was actually the exit that was taking payment. They evidently weren't expecting much of a crowd and didn't get one. Just 964 people. Ayr is a seaside resort and it's in the school holidays and it makes you wonder how much effort they put in to attracting new racegoers. It was one enclosure with just the club area open. The outside of the grandstands could do with a makeover but inside the club area looked good and it had the highest speck toilets you will see on a racecourse.

Outside the Ayr Gold Cup and Scottish National meetings the standard of racing at Ayr has slipped over the last few years and it was ordinary enough stuff today.

Ayr has been many things over the years, a port, mining town, and holiday resort and has tried and failed three times in the last thirty years to attain city status. The centre of the town and the front look pretty run down and our hotel would not win many awards either. At least we found a nice Italian restaurant for the evening.

Day 4

At last we made it to the heat wave at Carlisle. Ayr is not the easiest place to get to or get out of but it's nice countryside over to the M74. I hadn't read that work on the south Carlisle relief road meant that the road in from the motorway to the course has closed for several months. The sat-nav of course was well aware of it as we went through the back streets of the city. I haven't been flat racing here in over twenty years but at least in the summer there was no possibility of getting stuck on the car park in the mud.

A very ordinary card which was to prove the only one of the trip where I didn't find a winner. The end of the first loop and it was back to Wallasey for the night and an exceptionally poor Chinese take away.

Day 5

The longest day. An evening meeting at Ffos Las so no need for an early start but leaving at half past ten allowed for a lunch stop on the four-hour journey. The landlord of the pub we stopped at had once been a regular at Ffos Las but didn't have many good words for the course. Holding evening meetings at courses not close to a large conurbation doesn't seem to make much sense. Just 627 people in attendance. The heatwave had proved a one-day wonder and bits of rain and a cool breeze greeted us. While you can get an excellent meal at a fair price at every Irish course that's not the case in the UK. An overpriced chicken and mushroom pie was about the extent of the food on offer.

It might suit the West Wales trainers but it really was a stupid place to build a new racecourse especially one that wasn't really needed. Getting to the M4 is a pain and that was just the start of the problems on the trip to our next overnight stop at Richie's house in Dorking. No sooner were we on the motorway than we were taken off with the carriageway closed. On the roundabout they hadn't closed the on ramp so we went straight back on. One overnight motorway closure overcome but it wasn't too last. Approaching Cardiff we were off the motorway again and this time we had a not so lovely tour of some of Cardiff's suburbs before we could rejoin. Back into England and we were off the M4 again this time for a trip through parts of Bristol. Surely that would be it but no. At Newbury it was closed again and even the sat nav had had enough of the M4 and it sent us down to the M3. The motorway signs on the M3 soon informed us that the M25 was closed at Cobham just before we would get off that motorway. That didn't end up mattering as the M3 was also closed and we were off that well before the M25. How we would have managed without the sat nav I don't know as we trekked through the back lanes of Surrey passing close to Guildford. Eventually just before 1 o'clock we arrived at Richie's where we were greeted by his better half Theresa. "You lot all must be mad" she said. No doubt about that.

Day 6

On the road again at 8 o'clock on the way to the shuttle terminal at Folkstone. I hadn't been on the car train before and it was all well organised. There are up to four departures an hour and while the train we were booked on was due to be late we managed to get on an earlier departure. We were soon off on the A16 and A29 on the way to Deauville. French motorways are usually quiet with just the toll booths breaking up the three-hour trip. The final toll was for the magnificent Pont de Normandie over the estuary of the River Seine near Le Havre.

It was a late afternoon meeting starting at 4 o'clock and it was Arqana sales day. When I looked back at this day the previous year it was an all-weather fixture so it was pleasing to see a decent class card. A very good crowd, plenty of families and I guess plenty of holiday makers. While the food at Ffos Las might not have appealed here it was decent and a fair price.

When I first came to Deauville I mentioned that the stand was built at the wrong angle for races on the straight course. That day all but one of the races was on the round course but it was the opposite today and it really is impossible to watch the races live until the last 300 metres.

The accommodation for tonight was a very nice Auberge about ten kilometres outside Deauville.

Day 7

After the early start the day before there was no rush today. We were heading back the way we came and were surprised at the queue going into Deauville at the Pont de Normandie. We passed three horseboxes within the first hour with a trotting sulky attached and wondered where the meeting might be. Looking it up there was eighteen trotting meetings in France on the day. Further research discovered it was a public holiday for The Feast of the Assumption which explained the traffic heading into Deauville.

It also explained why there was racing at our destination of Ostend as it was also a holiday in Belgium and they usually only race at Ostend on Mondays.

Ostend is a big holiday destination with a beach that seems to go on forever and it was packed for the long weekend.

A very good crowd at the races but they weren't packed in like sardines as they were the last time I was here. Maybe that was because the price was up from €5 to €15. There was also a racecard with full form for €2.50. Eight races, three gallop and five trotting plus two for junior trotters. Four trotting races kicked it off including two qualifiers for a quite valuable final which climaxed the card.

I can't see the appeal of trotting and here the track was so sharp that the one who got the best break and the lead was near impossible to get passed. Picture Perfect was obviously better than her rivals in the first qualifier of the Golden Mile trot qualifier (she had won seven of her last nine races and far more money) and only paid 1.2 on the PMU) She then took the final with great ease again at odds on.

The three galop races were low grade and even bad French form proved better than any of the local form. Queen's Angel had one piece of form at Compiegne but was easily good enough to take the first under a no-nonsense ride from Lize Dieteren. Later on Miss Woo Woo who had won twice two years ago in France took the sprint at odds on. Both were making their Belgium debuts. The only real local to win was Lexington Force who took the St Leger qualifier and defied 12 Kg worth of penalties to win under Sascha Stappaerts.

The racing however was just the half of the evening. After the second race a man appeared on the course in a golden jacket with a microphone and within a few seconds he had the crowd singing along with him. He was back out when there was a delay between races and before the trotting final he was out with the trophy giving the race the big build up. It was all great fun.

After racing to celebrate the 7in7 we found what outside said it was a café but it looked like a pub and was still serving beer at midnight. The Flemish stew was also excellent.

The original itinerary just said Day 8 think how to get home. That proved to be being dropped off at Ashford International station, train to St Pancras and a walk to Euston. I have got a train back from Euston for the last four years after one of my trips and have now got refunds each year from Arriva for the train running late.

Planning my trips is usually part of the fun but it was nice to be just a passenger in the back seat here. A thanks to Richie for the idea, the planning and for doing all the driving.

HEXHAM NEWS

Our Unibet Raceday is on Friday 7th November. We are delighted that two of our races will be shown on ITV. A 2m4f Class 3 Handicap Chase - £20,000 and a 2m4f Class 4 Handicap Hurdle - £13,000 Both races will be sponsored by Unibet.



2025/2026 NATIONAL HUNT 'SATNAPS PLUS' CHALLENGE

The winter NH tipping challenge is back for another year with **Andy White** taking over from Phil Evans who is taking a well-deserved retirement from running the competition. The competition will run over 24 Saturdays (split into four rounds of six weeks each) covering the main jumps season in the UK, starting on Saturday 15 November 2025 and finishing on 25 April 2026 at Sandown's Jumps Finale. There will be no breaks in this season's competition.

Prizes will be awarded for each round and the seasonal competition – prize details to be confirmed once number of entries received is confirmed.

As last winter, entrants will need to make **TWO** selections on each Saturday. 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 60 pts per entry date.

If entrants fail to enter on any date they will be allocated a 'default selection'. Entrants must now select a number between 1-34 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 is included in the competition rules. Similarly, default rules will apply for any non-runners.

Entry fees are again held at £10 for all four rounds. In a change for this season, **members can now make two entries in the competition** although spouses/partners/family of members may also enter as before.

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 email (the preferred method), phone or text. The deadline for all methods of entry will again be 1pm and with the default selection rules 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 **Andy White** at the new competition email address **nmrcsatnap@outlook.com** and sending your entry fee/s via direct bank payment (bank details are the same as in previous years but can be supplied)

If paying by cheque please make it payable to 'North & Midlands Racing Club' and payments sent to NMRC (address below).
✂.....

SATURDAY NAPS+ NATIONAL HUNT CHALLENGE (2025-26) ENTRY FORM

Please enter me in this winter's competition. My £10 entry fee (payable to North & Midlands Racing Club) is enclosed.
Please post to NMRC at 53 Dalebrook Rd, Sale, Greater Manchester M33 3LB

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 (1-34).....

GO RACING IN YORKSHIRE NEWS – OCTOBER 2025

Jump Racing 2025/26

The jump season is just around the corner and kicks off at Wetherby on Wednesday 15th October with their opening meeting, supporting spinal research.

Now in its 35th year, Wetherby's Northern Raceday for Spinal Research has raised of £800,000 for charity. Guests this year include popular northern jockey, Graham Lee and guest speaker, event rider Saffron Cresswell, who was left paralysed after a fall at Bramham Horse Trials.

Tickets for the hospitality marquee can be purchased from Wetherby Racecourse's website and include a champagne reception, three-course lunch, prize auction and raffle in the Spinal Research Marquee, located next to the Parade Ring.

Catterick are next to host the jumping action, starting on Friday 21st November, with Doncaster not far behind, starting on Friday 28th November.

A full fixture list can be found on our website, www.goracing.co.uk.

The battle to be the Go Racing In Yorkshire Future Stars Apprentice Series Champion is firmly on!

The contest, supported by Malton based saddlers, White Rose Saddlery will finish with the turf season at Doncaster on Saturday 8th November.



With two early winners in the bag, Mason Paetel leads the contest with 48 points, while Archie Young is only one win behind on 32 points. Tom Kiely-Marshall is currently in third place with 20 points.

Three races remain in the series and it's all to play for!

Mason Paetel takes the first race in the Go Racing In Yorkshire Future Stars Apprentice Series at Doncaster on Destinado for James Owen.

NMRC CHANGES COMING IN 2026

Following the feedback to our NMRC 2030 project we now have some initial thoughts on how the club will change next year. These changes have been agreed in outline by the NMRC committee but will still need to be formally approved at the club's AGM in November/December. To vote at the AGM please send your e mail address to info@northernracingclub.com so we can share the agenda and any voting options in due course.

Membership Subscriptions

We have decided to bring back an annual membership fee next year. This will be £12 for sole/joint memberships at the same address. It will, however, give subscribers ONE £10 'e-voucher' to use per sole/joint membership to enter any NMRC competition in 2026 including: Alex Bird Competition, Grand National Sweepstake, Heritage Handicaps Competition, NH Saturday Naps Challenge, Super 6 League (new in 2026) or the 59's Monthly Draw. If the e-voucher is used by members, the nominal membership fee is effectively £2pa.

As a one off, all members will be asked to complete a new membership form in 2026 (via e mail or post) so we can update our membership data base. To comply with GDPR requirements these forms include a 'consent' clause regarding use of members personal data. From 2027 onwards, renewal membership forms need not be completed unless member's contact details have changed. Payments can still be made by bankers order, online banking or in the post by cheque.

The membership renewal date will be March 1st 2026 although members entering the Alex Bird competition will be encouraged to send in their membership forms from 1st February onwards to ensure that the e-vouchers can be allocated in good time. Fuller details will be in the December/January magazine.

Once members renew in 2026 they will be given a new membership number (this will not change in subsequent renewals) and details of how to redeem their e-voucher. As many parts of the club website will again be password protected in 2026, details of the new website password will also be shared at this time.

Club Magazine

With steadily falling numbers receiving the printed magazine in recent years, we have decided that the printed edition will cease after the Feb/Mar 2026 issue. We will then continue to produce the magazine until late summer with issue 400 being the final copy.

From then on, we shall still collect what would have been 'magazine content' to share via the club website – hopefully this will be more current in some instances if we do not have to stick to the bi-monthly production dates as at present.

If members receiving the paper magazine do not have internet access we shall do whatever we can to keep you abreast of club activities – in the first instance please write to NMRC at 53 Dalebrook Rd, Sale, M33 3LB advising how you want to be contacted in future and we shall do what we can to assist.

Those people on our main mailing list will still receive short updates via e mail like the 'new magazine' alerts at present.

Other benefits of the revised membership system will be that with a better membership data base we can again assess whether it is feasible to arrange some club events in certain locations.

Whilst some of the new membership fees will be used for the website costs it will also allow us to award prizes for the new 'free to enter' ITV 7 competition as well as the 'wooden spoon' prizes in the Alex Bird, Heritage Handicaps & NH Saturday Naps competitions.

Next Racin' Deadline is Monday 1st December

Jargon Buster 2 With Mike Wheeler

The parade ring or paddock offers racegoers the chance to make detailed observations about each runner before a race. It may provide valuable clues to a horse's fitness and well-being and give bettors an edge. Of course, there's jargon used in the paddock that often needs explaining and here are some of the terms.

Green/greenness: describes a horse who is inexperienced or immature in their behaviour; often associated with younger horses, particularly if it's their first time on a racecourse. This may be displayed by a horse whinnying in the parade ring or being distracted by the crowd which can be negative signs.

Has Scope/scopey: a horse is said to have 'scope' if they're likely to develop and mature physically; again it's associated with younger horses.

Unfurnished: a similar term to scopey, it specifically refers to a horse who hasn't filled into their frame yet but is likely to do so.

On its toes: the horse is walking energetically, almost bouncing around the paddock; this is a positive sign especially for sprinters. Horses running over longer distances will ideally be more relaxed but should be alert and interested in their surroundings.

Dull/gone in the coat: horses show how well they are through their coats, and this is a very important aspect for paddock watchers. A gleaming coat with good muscle definition indicates that a horse is probably fit and well but less so if their coat is dull and dry or there is poor colouring. Because of their colour, the coats of grey horses are harder to assess, so if you see one that stands out it's worth noting.

Sweating up: like humans, horses sweat particularly in summer although it can be difficult to pinpoint the cause and whether to take note or ignore it. It's probably best judged in context of the overall appearance of a horse; so if there's a lack of muscle definition and a dull coat, regard sweating as an added sign of unfitness. It also depends on where the sweat is located and the amount of it. A bit of perspiration down the neck isn't a worry but a horse awash with sweat especially if it's dripping under the saddle, is a concern. On the other hand if a horse normally sweats up, the absence of sweat could be a negative. As with all aspects of paddock watching, uncharacteristic behaviour is often the most worrying sign.

NMRC 2025 COMMITTEE

Phil Evans	Chairman
Helen Goodwill	Membership & HH Comp
Ken Unsworth	Magazine printing
Dave Bates	Stable Visits
Richard Mattinson	Hon Treasurer
Mark Banks	Alex Bird Competition
Gordon Armistead	Racecourse Reporter
Andy White	Satnaps & Yorkshire P.T.P.
Keith Dodd	WhatsApp Group
Judith Bradley	Social Media
Michael Wheeler	General Assistant
Charles Rear	General Assistant
Kieran Rowbottom	Hon Club President

Please direct all emails to info@northernracingclub.com and general postal correspondence to NMRC at 53 Dalebrook Rd, Sale, Greater Manchester M33 3LB. Competition entries and membership subscriptions can still be sent directly to those names on the competition entry forms and membership renewals forms etc.