

Autumn 2021



FINISH LINE

Cheltenham & Three Counties Race Club



Richard Davis Award

Injured Jockey's Christmas Card and Calendar 2021



This year's Christmas card is entitled 'Stride for Stride' by renown equine artist Jane Braithwaite, depicts a traditional Winter racing scene, painted specifically for the IJF. Pack of 10 cards and envelopes. Pre-printed greeting of 'Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year' are £7.50



This year's Calendar is "Racing Through The Year". A selection of stunning images from a year in the world of racing, taken at the UK's racecourses by members of the 'Horse Writers and Photographers Association' (HWP) who have generously donated their artwork to help raise funds for the IJF. Contains all UK and Irish fixtures and UK point-to-points.

The Calendar is being produced in three different formats, Wall (£12), Desktop and Slim line (£10)

(Available November)

Cards, Calendars and other items can be purchased via the website <https://shop.ijf.org.uk>

RICHARD DAVIS AWARD

For the Top Conditional Jockey riding at Cheltenham, Chepstow, Hereford, Ludlow, Stratford, Warwick and Worcester during the period
3rd May 2021 – 22nd April 2022

(Sponsored by the Cheltenham & Three Counties Race Club)

Scoring: a Winner 10 points, a Second 7 points, a Third 4 points, a Fourth 2 points.

Latest placings (up to and including 23rd September 2021)

1 st	Liam Harrison	121 pts
2 nd	Kevin Brogan	110 pts
3 rd	Jack Tudor	59 pts
4 th	Fergus Gregory	39 pts



Richard Davis was a talented jump jockey tragically killed in a fall over fences in 1996. This award is named in his memory.

John Hales Article

At the moment it is all about planning the start to the season. At the present moment we are planning to be at Chepstow on the 8th and 9th of October. This will be subject to the going and we do need plenty of rain. For the new season we have an interest in 12 horses and they are broken down as follows.

J.Hales/ Lisa Hales.

We have increased the number from 3 to 6 and we believe we will have a very good season.

1. *Fidelio Vallis.*

He had a great season last year and this year we are putting him over fences. It is planned to start at Chepstow on the 9th of October in a valuable novice Chase. We expect him to make further progress in the new season.

2. *Politologue.*

Hopefully the bad luck he had at the festival and Aintree is

now behind him. This will probably be his last season as he will be 11 years old at the Festival and he has already won over a million pounds. You will see him at Sandown for the Tingle Creek. After that we will assess him before we go to the Festival.

3. *Time for a Tune.*

We purchased this horse following his impressive form in winning a Bumper at Ffos Las. He is due to run at Chepstow in October.

4. *Eclair Danaiy.*

This will be a very important season for this horse. I am hoping he will show sufficient ability to have a crack at the King George.

5. *Message Personell.*

A recent purchase following an impressive win in France. He will be ready to race in November.

6. *Grandads Cottage*

Is on the injured list and he will miss this season and hopefully

will be ok for 2022.

7. *Protektorat.*

One of 4 horses we have with Sir Alex Ferguson, Ged Mason and my daughter Lisa. This is a very good horse and his initial target will be the “Paddy Power Gold Cup “ at Cheltenham in November.

8. *Monmiral.*

Unbeaten so far and Paul Nicholls is keen to see if we have a Champion Hurdle Horse. He will be entered in the Fighting 5th at Newcastle in November. After this he will be assessed to see if he remains over hurdles or goes chasing.

9. *Lakota Warrior.*

Should be ready to run in a Bumper at Chepstow in October.

10. *Sonagino*

A new recruit for the Sir Alex Ferguson , Ged Mason partnership. Very impressive when winning in France and should have a bright future.

We have 2 horses in the GiGi partnership

11. *Flash Collonges*

Has shown plenty of ability and is now recovering from an eye problem. Will go over fences and should be ready to run before the end of Nov.

12. *Terras Wood.*

A new recruit who will be prepared for a Bumper before the end of the year.

I believe we may have a horse good enough for the *King George* this Christmas but only time will tell.

We cannot wait to get started but only today we have pulled out 2 horses from the Chepstow meeting due to the ground. Plenty of rain is still required but I believe we have a very good squad of horses and I cannot wait to get started.

J Hales

Worcester Picnic 2021

During the season we may travel to some bigger and higher profile race meetings, but for Katie and I one of the absolute highlights of our racing calendar is the annual club picnic at Worcester. Of course, last year the pandemic made it impossible for us to meet up and while this was very disappointing it did help make this year's visit to Pitchcroft that little bit more special.

We gathered in our 'traditional' spot by the rails before the evening fixture on the 1st of September feeling grateful that once again the weather had been kind to us. The 20 or so members who came along were treated to a real feast of homemade savouries, sandwiches and an impressive cheeseboard. The bar was doing a good trade; what better way to start an evening's jump racing than a glass of Pimms? It was the first time that many of us had met up since the events of 2020, so there was a lot to catch up on with friends old and new.

With the PA system announcing that the horses were entering the Parade Ring we made our way

over to the track for what turned out to be an exciting and on occasion dramatic evenings racing; there was an audible gasp when Brendan Powell's saddle slipped as he and Shoal Bay headed up the run in with the race seemingly at their mercy.

With the evening drawing in and the racing coming to a close, we headed back out into the car park for coffee and some gorgeous homemade cakes. As the light faded we ate, chatted and enjoyed the pleasure of going racing with friends, something we have all sorely missed for such a long time. The fact that the car park was empty and the Racing TV lorries had left and we were still chatting says much about the evening. While we enjoyed meeting friends, the most important part of the evening was our opportunity to present the annual Richard Davis Award to the top Conditional Jockey riding at Cheltenham, Chepstow, Hereford, Ludlow, Stratford, Warwick and Worcester. It's always a poignant time to remember Richard, an incredibly talented jockey and by all accounts an impressive young man, who tragically passed away in 1996. However, it is also a time to look forward and celebrate the careers

of those starting out of their journey in the sport. Over the years the award has been won by jockeys who have gone on to make hugely successful careers. This year the award was won by Bryan Carver, a man from Cork who is part of Paul Nicholl's team down in Ditcheat. With a record of 67 wins and a 14% strike rate it seems likely that he too will be a name to be reckoned with in future. Unfortunately, Bryan was unable to be at Worcester to collect his award; he was nursing an injury and at the time we met was unlikely to be riding for a few weeks while he received treatment. Bryan though did ask his friend David Noonan to collect the award on his behalf from the Davis family.

Bryan's name will now be added to the roll of honour which includes:

1996 - 1997 Timmy Murphy
1997 - 1998 Robert Thornton
1998 - 1999 Joe Tizzard
1999 - 2000 Jodie Mogford
2000 - 2001 Paul Flynn
2001 - 2002 Henry Oliver
2002 - 2003 Marcus Foley
2003 - 2004 James Davies
2004 - 2005 Sam Thomas
2005 - 2006 William Kennedy
2006 - 2007 Tom O'Brien
2007 - 2008 Liam Treadwell

2008 - 2009 Aidan Coleman
2009 - 2010 Rhys Flint
2010 - 2011 Sam Twiston-Davies
2011 - 2012 Adam Wedge
2012 - 2013 Micheal Nolan
2013 - 2014 Gavin Sheehan
2014 - 2015 Sean Bowen
2015 - 2016 Ciaran Gethings
2016 - 2017 Harry Cobden
2017 - 2018 James Bowen
2018 - 2019 Richard Patrick
2019 - 2020 Connor Brace
2020 - 2021 Bryan Carver

It was indeed a memorable and enjoyable evening. My thanks go out to all of those whose hard work made it happen in particular David, Jan, Helen, Rosemarie and Peter.

A special thanks is also due to the Davis family whose company is always a pleasure.



David Miller

Jo Davis Stable Visit

There was a ridiculous sense of excitement in the air on the morning of the visit. It's always exciting going to a stable visit but this one, for us at least, was special as it was the first club event for over a year and a chance to see old friends as well as make new ones. Jo Davis had kindly agreed to let us visit her yard so Highworth, Wiltshire was the destination set into the sat nav and off we went. The yard when we arrived proved to be in a lovely location, with a lot of work having gone in to making it well laid out with a light airy feeling. As it turns out this was exactly what Jo had wanted as in previous yards she had not had that luxury and the horses had suffered from allergies and bugs as a result of no air flow. Jo explained to us that she had planned to take us up to the gallops but, if we didn't mind, she had her vet on site and could we stop in the yard. This proved to be an inspired decision as together with Shane the vet we had an incredibly educational and interesting morning. Jo explained that she doesn't get her horses 'racing' fit just fit and Shane was of

the same mindset. After 16 years of riding and working with horses Jo recognises when things aren't right with them and with the help of her team and Shane knows how to put most things right. She informed us that she preferred to have an unbroken horse as she can then break them in 'properly' and work on any quirks they may have.

It's For Alan was one horse that was being seen by Shane. Jo had worked out why Alan had been a bit of handful when upon arranging a scan for his neck an old fracture that had not healed had been discovered. This was treated with cortisone and had helped Alan to get back on track and indeed into the winners enclosure. Shane explained outside when watching Catlow walking up and down the yard the importance of listening to the noise and beat of hooves, which can if there is a differing sound of the four noises, indicate a horse has a problem with one of its legs. The use of a horse tail was also explained and how, because for a horse it is an extension of the spine, it can show if a horse is favouring one side and indicates problems in other places. Jo has invested in a pulsed electromagnetic therapy machine

which helps reduce inflammation and pains. Horses simply stand on what is in essence a vibrating floor, Jo dials in the right amount of juice, and away it goes. Everybody was invited to have a go on it and some didn't look like they wanted to get off! Jo has, at the moment, a few horses that need some work. Gallic Destiny is one, Sagazza another and even Claude the TheseGirlsCan Racing Club horse had minor ailments. Jo is on top of it all and has the yard set up to deal with these ailments. She has just had a deep sand/rubber gallop installed as it obviously gets horses fit but in a very kind and safe way. The horses get physio once a week and in order to reduce allergies soya is now not used. The horses are also turned out for a few hours every day.

After going round the yard and seeing the other incumbents, including ponies, one of which Jo's daughter rode with great aplomb in a competition that afternoon, we returned to the first stable to watch Shane using ultra sound to position his needle into just the right point in the inmates haunch so the medication got to exactly the right place. Whilst doing this he even managed to

tell us about the nine horses he cares for going to the olympics this year representing four different countries. Between his technical know how and Jo's care, attention and absolute dedication I can't think there's a better place to home a horse.

The morning was rounded off with breakfast in the courtyard of a nearby public inn where we discussed whether to become trainers ourselves. We decided the job just isn't stable enough.



Mike Lawrence

Upton Viva Stud Visit

So, on the third Wednesday in July, seventeen of the great and good members of CTCRC assembled on the Oxfordshire / Warwickshire border to visit Upton Viva Stud the incredible facility owned by Robert Waley-Cohen. It felt a bit like going home for Christmas as we arrived as the club has been there a few times before and all the old faces were still there, well, all apart from the Mr Waley-Cohen who was struggling with a chest infection and therefore passed his host duties over to Jayne Bushby the stud manager and her assistant Alison Neasham

We started the tour in the mares barn which has lovely big stabling as the incumbents will obviously be needing a bit more room than in a racing stable. There are also some heat lamp style lights to help bring barren mares forward into their season. Mares that have given birth normally come into season around 10 days later and Jayne explained there is a 24hr golden time for them to visit prospective sires when the chance of pregnancy are at the highest so

the timing of visiting studs can be a real headache.



The mares and foals were in a paddock just outside the barn and included the eleven year old Polly Peachum who is quite small and as a result has small foals. This year she had a small brown filly by Crystal Ocean. Santa Adelia was also there with her chestnut foal (by Gentlewave). Santa Adelia is 3 parts related to the wonderful Smad Place so hopes are high.... Tidara Angel, Free Thinking and Tell It To Me were also there with offspring, two of whom had Blue Bresil for a dad. He is Jaynes favourite sire for his temperament and looks. The foals were all very friendly and our two hosts explained they are handled as much as possible as early as possible because this makes everyone's life easier in the future.

The stud has up to ten broodmares and this year they have all gone to British stallions because of Brexit and travelling costs being so high. Violet Express was also out in a paddock and she is the stud 'nanny' to all the youngsters. The babies aren't weaned till 7 months and they don't begin trading with the long rein till around two. The ladies believe that short bursts of training gives the best results and looking at the temperament of the horses in their care there is no reason to doubt them. The knowledge, care and work ethic of the staff is extraordinary and as in other studs the club has visited their dedication is of the highest order



Back outside the barn Elusive Belle was paraded as was Lust for Glory

and of course the mighty Long Run wandered out to show off how good he still looks and if the first two named looked in grand order Long Run was looking better.

As has become the norm a group of us repaired back to a local inn for food and conversation, in this case it was The Castle at Edgehill. The other option was called A Taste Of The Raj, where I believe you are hit with long sticks and made to build complicated train networks. We dodged a bullet then and had a lovely lunch sat out in the afternoon sunshine.



Happy Days
Mike Lawrence

Kirtlington Stud Visit

On a sunny Wednesday in August we headed off on a visit to Kirtlington Stud, which is a located just 9 miles from Oxford in what must be one of the most famous two square miles in racing history.

This patch of limestone brash has raised and bred no less than five winners of the Derby, seven winners of the Guineas and a winner of the Oaks. It's setting is absolutely stunning; 345 acres of wonderfully maintained paddocks, barns and fields with amazing views over the Oxfordshire countryside. Finding it though was a bit of a challenge with our Sat Nav sending Dad up a bridle path!! We were met by Chris Budgett, who established the current Stud back in 1989. His expert local knowledge proved very useful as he was handed the phone to guide some of us to our meeting point (Dad was not alone). Chris stayed with us throughout the tour giving us a fascinating insight not only into the Stud itself but also the art of breeding top class race horses and the Bloodstock market in general.

Listening to Chris alone was worth

the journey.

Our first port of call was to see a group of Yearlings in the Blakeney Yard who will be heading to various sales during September and October. The youngsters we were shown included progeny of some of the very best stallions around including Frankel, Cracksman and Lope De Vega. As each of the horses was paraded for us against the backdrop of some magnificent stables, Chris gave us an interesting insight as to how they prepare for the sales. Horses are usually brought in around two months before the sale and their preparation includes practice walking in a ring to help make sure they are well behaved and prepared for the sale environment.



We then had the excitement of hopping onto a trailer for a tractor driven tour around the rest of the Stud. Our first stop was the foaling unit where Chris talked us

through the process of foaling, including what happens when the mare is actually giving birth. Above the stable they have a room with a large window so they are able to watch from above and not disturb the mare.

The trailer then took us on a tour of the paddocks where we saw some of the hugely impressive mares and foals. Chris was on hand to answer all our questions and his team, who came with us, led up some of the mares so we could take a better look at them. Might we have seen the next superstar of the Flat world? It would be nice to think we did. They were all very cute and friendly, as they have been handled lots.



Our final port of call was a paddock of the retired brood mares which included one who will be known to many of our Members; Elite Racing's Ffestiniog. She was certainly a favourite on

the day.

Chris explained how the Stud believes that the mares should go onto enjoy a good life once their breeding days are over. This particular group were blessed not only with the expertise of Chris' team but also a huge paddock and the most magnificent views. It is a wonderful place to be a happy horse.

Our visit came to an end too quickly. Chris and his team could not have given us a warmer or friendlier welcome. Dad and I headed back home but many of the Members headed off for lunch at the village pub which did look very nice as we drove past. Our thanks must go out to Chris, his team and Sarah who made this memorable morning possible.



Katie Miller

A day in the life of an Equine Hospital Lab Technician

No two days are the same and some work is very seasonal, but I will try and give a flavour of life in the white coat! The lab is run 8.30-5.30 Mon-Fri, and Sat 8.30-12.30, by 2 technicians, each working part time. Out of hours the nurses and house vets can run emergency samples, or call us in if necessary.

First task is the biochemistry and haematology machines are turned on, reagents checked and controls run to check accuracy of results. The out of hours log is checked and any results typed up and sent to the vet or to the in-patient office.

Bacteriology is checked next so that any decisions regarding suitable antibiotic use can be made. In TB stud season (Jan-May) this is a huge part of the day. There will be pre-breeding CEM swabs (Contagious Equine Metritis) from mares and stallions. Every mare and stallion has to have swabs done after 1st January for the breeding season. The CEM organism, *Taylorella equigenitalis*, is a notifiable disease and is currently not in the UK TB

population but it is in Europe and USA, and occurs infrequently in the non-TB population and can be carried in semen used for AI (Artificial insemination). The swabs also look for 2 other bacteria - *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – which can cause infertility or abortion. We are tested twice a year by DEFRA/BEVA with blind samples for this to ensure we correctly identify the bacteria involved so that we are certified competent to issue the pre-breeding certificates.

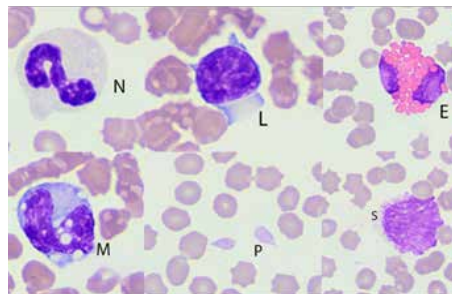
Once the mare is in season cervical swabs will also be taken prior to covering, to ensure the mare is not carrying any infection or inflammation, that could cause infertility or pass to the stallion. A smear is made and cytology (cells) looked at under the microscope, and a 48hr culture is also done. This is time dependent as the mare may be booked in for an early morning covering, so the culture will need to be checked before that happens.

Other bacteriology samples may be from wounds, infected

joints or peritoneal fluid, suspected Strangles cases, or faeces in cases of diarrhoea. Sometimes we just need to rule out a particular bacterium, such as Salmonella or Strep equi (Strangles). In other cases, we will identify the bacteria and test which antibiotics they are sensitive to, to ensure the best treatment is given and reduce the risk of antibiotic sensitivity if the wrong one is used. Environmental swabs are also routinely taken from theatre, stables that have had infectious cases or horses with diarrhoea, or from equipment, to make sure cleaning has been sufficient to prevent spread of disease.

Blood samples will be submitted from the in-patients, vets on the road and from referring vets, and these are run throughout the day. Some samples will be urgent ones in the case of a colic or possible joint infection, so that the horse can go to surgery quickly if needed. Unlike your doctor, most blood results run in-house are available the same day, although the vet may not get a chance to report them until late in the day. Samples may be run from sick horses, from racehorses to check they can be declared to run, or pre-op samples for horses

having a GA (general anaesthesia). Different profiles, eg liver, kidney, fitness, can be run depending on what is required, or a general screen as a starting point. Most of the blood profile can be run on automated machines with multiple samples running at once but we always do a manual differential count of white cells under the microscope. A thin blood smear is made, the cells are counted under the microscope and percentage of each type noted. Joint and peritoneal samples will also be looked at on a smear to check for neutrophils or abnormal cells, which can be a sign of infection or inflammation depending on their morphology. With experience we can sometimes suggest further testing that may be required. Once a month we are sent external samples for quality control to check our machines and techniques are accurate.



Different white cells under the microscope

Other samples that can come in through the day include faeces for worm egg counts, tracheal washes either for suspect disease or for racing declaration, hair plucks for parasites or ringworm, or samples for referral to an external lab. New born foals will have their IgG (immunoglobulin G) tested to ensure they have taken adequate colostrum from the mare. If the IgG level is low the foal may need a plasma transfusion.

A relatively new test we run is LAMP (Loop-mediated isothermal amplification) testing for Flu, EHV (Equine Herpes virus) and Strep equi (Strangles). This uses swabs taken from the nasopharynx and placed in a buffer liquid. This amplifies the DNA present to make even small amounts detectable. (This method is used in Covid testing, it is similar to PCR). It is a quick test and useful for horses being admitted to isolation due to fever, cough or nasal discharge. We don't currently run PCR tests, these have to be sent away, but they can be used for ringworm and other diseases and give quicker results than waiting for culture.

As well as running the samples, they also have to be

logged, reported to vets and checked that the vet has reported to the owner. We also take part in disease surveys, reporting positive cases of certain diseases at the time of outbreak, and also providing a quarterly summary of all our testing and number of positive results. As people are now used to with Covid, by analysing the different strains of viral diseases such as flu, and their susceptibility or resistance to current vaccines, we can be part of keeping the equine population healthy and protected. We sometimes take part in research studies, or analysis of a new test or reagent.

Laboratory work may not be top of peoples list when they think of veterinary work but it is an interesting, diverse and rewarding part of the hospital teamwork in case management, and medical or surgical decisions. And I can pop over to the stables any time and get my real live horse fix!



Catherine Salthouse

Q&A with Johnny Burke

Q:How and where did you first become interested in horses, did you always want to be a jockey

A: Having been brought up in a horse racing environment I was always interested in horses; other kids wanted to kick a ball around but I just wanted to ride ponies. As I grew older I would even be riding out dad's horses before I went to school so I guess it was inevitable that I would pursue a career as a jockey. Having Davy Condon and Paul Townend as close neighbours possibly influenced my decision as well.



(Photo Amy Burke)

Q:What inspired you to take up competitive race riding

A: I used to go to the races with my dad and there would be the

likes of Derek O'Connor and Davy Russell riding and I guess they gave me the inspiration to want to become a jockey.

Q: How does racing in Ireland compare to racing elsewhere

A: I think racing in Ireland is more competitive mainly because there is less of it compared to over here and it is more tactical, sometimes due to the pace of the race.

Q: Was it an easy decision to move from Ireland to Britain and how did this move come to fruition

A: After suffering a few injuries and returning to become a freelance jockey, yes, it was an easy decision. I received a call asking if I would be interested in becoming Charlie Longsdon's stable jockey and I jumped at the chance. After having ridden for Mr and Mrs Potts who were very good to me and gave me the opportunity to ride some brilliant horses, this was the next stage of my career. Moving over here was a fast learning curve with racing every day and the travel far exceeded the amount of travelling I used to do in Ireland but I knew it would help me in my career and I'll be forever grateful to Charlie for giving me the chance, I still ride for him now

when I can.

Q: Most memorable ride to date in your career and why

A: That would be when I rode a horse called SumosNovios to victory in the Imperial Call Chase at Cork in 2018. Sumos was a huge horse, nearly 18hh, and was owned and trained by my dad so you can imagine to win on the horse was very special. The win was also very poignant because Sumos used to be owned by Ray Humphries but sadly Ray passed away and dad was gifted the horse. Some of your members may remember that Ray used to be the owner of The Listener who ran in many of the top chases and won big races in Ireland such as The Hennessey Cognac Chase and the famous John Durkan Chase



Honeysuckle (Racing Post)

Q: If you could ride any horse currently in training which one

would it be

A: Well, it's not going to happen because I can't see Rachael Blackmore giving up the ride but I'd liked to ride Honeysuckle who looks pretty much faultless

Q: Is there a young horse that is progressing nicely and maybe worth keeping an eye out for the next NH season

A: Tom George trains a nice young horse called Kakamora who I like a lot and I have won on him twice at the back end of last season. After winning at Huntingdon, Tom stepped him up in trip and class and he won by 5 lengths. I think Tim Syder, who is a great supporter of NH racing, has a nice horse on his hands.

Q: Who do you turn to for advice and guidance

A: My dad

Q: Favourite Racecourse

A: In Ireland it would have to be Leopardstown and over here it would be Aintree

Q:Most difficult Racecourse to ride and why

A: With the various undulations, turns and contours Cheltenham can be difficult and obviously a

jockey has to be tactically aware, even more so at The Festival because of the pure nature of the old and new courses



Sizing John (ITM Racing Post)

Q: Best horse you have ridden and why

A: Sizing John, he was a brilliant horse who had so much scope and was a great jumper, so clever and an absolute joy to ride. His win in the G1 Paddy Power Future Champions Novice Hurdle in 2014 was a day I'll long remember



Sizing John (ITM Racing Post)

Q: Who do you admire in racing

A: Stable Staff, they do a marvellous job. The majority of the time they have early mornings, late evenings and obviously the days when they take horses to the courses can also be very long, I just wish, as a sport, we could do more for them

Q: Favourite TV racing presenter/ summariser

A: Nick Luck and Gary O'Brien – both very knowledgeable and naturally gifted at their jobs

Q: What is a typical day for you

A: If I'm booked for rides close to home, I'll ride out or school in the morning and then drive to the course but if I'm booked for rides that are a far way away then I'm usually on the road early to get to the course. Once there I might have a jog around the course or walk the course with a couple of the other jocks. Once I've finished my rides I get back on the road and get home as soon as I can so I can have a meal before chilling.

Q: What are your hobbies

A: Golf and walking are on my list of hobbies

Q: Favourite holiday location

A: I haven't really travelled abroad much but Estepona in Spain is a really nice place

Q: Pet hate(s)

A: People who say "I don't know"

Q: Food heaven and food hell

A: Heaven is steak and chips with a peppercorn sauce, hell is cucumber, I can't stand it

Q: What do you think racing does best

A: I think racing welcomes everyone and there is a role of some form for anyone that wants to be a part of it

Q: What is your worst habit

A: Biting my fingernails, I'm always being told off for doing it

Q: What is your most treasured possession

A: My mobile phone, goodness knows how we managed previously without mobile phones

Q: Social media – friend or foe

A: Bit of both really; I'm happy to be on it because I can interact with the genuine racing fan but some of the comments I just park and ignore. Like most things in life

there is good and bad

Q: Do you have a nickname

A: English James – I have Mark Enright and Sean Flanagan to thank for that

Q: Fast forward 10 years – what would you ideally like to be doing

A: Hopefully I'll still be riding and will be riding lots of winners, injuries permitting of course. When I do decide to hang up the boots I'd like to become a racing commentator. During a period when I was injured I had the chance to commentate on races at Tramore, Punchestown and Cork and I really enjoyed it. Currently it's my retirement plan but we'll see how things work out



(Photo ITM)

By Jamie Sharp

Jo O'Neill Article

This summer has zipped by! I went to Epsom Downs and ticked that off on my imaginary list of racecourses. It was a beautiful place, with lots of history and grandeur. Throughout the summer months, we had lots of runners at Worcester, which always symbolises summer.

By now the long, hot sunny days have changed into rainy autumnal ones! The leaves are still green but soon they'll crisp to golden and brown. This means the likes of Cheltenham and Aintree are nearly back again. In September, Harrison Day, Head of Travelling, had a fall and broke his ankle. I jumped at the chance to become the temporary Number 1 and revelled in the many more days racing and seeing my racing friends regularly. Harrison was operated on and will have to take 6-8 weeks off – we'll miss him but I'll keep everything going for him. I was sad to hear about the retirement of Race Day Presenter Charlie Parkin, who'd worked at many racecourses over the years. For as long as I've worked in racing, Charlie was in the

paddock, helping the sponsors pick the BTO. he always around the weighing room when I'd declare and drop in the colour bag. he was the most dapper dresser in smart suits and was always charming. I always wanted to win a turn out so he could say my name over the tannoy in his dulcet tones. The first time I did so was alongside Kadito, trained by Robin Dickin, at Wincanton in March 2002 and I won many more since then. Charlie announced the owners, trainer, jockey and myself after we'd won the Ryanair Chase at the 2009 Festival – and I'll never forget his kind words. I know it's not just me, but a lot of stable staff will miss him – he's been part of a day's racing for a long time and is irreplaceable.

Happy Retirement Charlie – racing won't forget you.



On 6th September, I spent my lunchtime at an afternoon tea put on for former stable staff by Racing Welfare. It made me smile

that I knew three people, including Mike Edwards, who had an ex-racehorse Halex who used to live with my own horse. I spent a lovely hour and a half, hearing the stories of people who once did the job I now do and how much it's changed. I met the lovely Welfare Officers, volunteers and the Racing Vicar. I felt like I was giving back a little to the sport that has given me so much.



I left early on 9th September to take Generation Gap up to Doncaster Sales. The sun was shining and I perched on a camping chair for a few hours, basking. 'Gen Gap' had only a few requests to trot-up so I had a great day socialising more than actually running him up and down. Head of travelling to Ben Pauling, Hannah Dean and I even had time to get an ice cream from the van at the edge of the ring.

Gen Gap didn't meet his reserve so

I pulled out his plaits, collected a pass out and brought him home.



So far this season, namely due to my Head of Travelling duties, I've led up two winners. Pens Man won his second chase, this time at Warwick under conditional Kevin Brogan, and Pagero won under Jonjo Junior at Worcester over hurdles. Pagero, nicknamed 'Paggy', meant a lot to me because he lives down the pens, which is where I work (when I'm at work, not racing!). He's buzzy and excitable, keen in his races and up the gallops but to look after, he's the sweetest character, always friendly.



By October, we had twenty-three winners, which is steady away.

With a yardful of youngsters, it may not be our best season numerically but hopefully a lot of those babies will grow into winning racehorses.



My little Jack Russell terrier, Daisy has been exhibiting some very odd behaviour. Usually, when I get up before 05:00, she stays curled up in bed but from September, she's been up as soon as my car keys tinkle, stretching, yawning and flapping her ears in a shake. She accompanies me to the pens and whilst I muck out, she spends a fun hour and a half ratting. She sniffs rats out under the pallet floor of the feed shed, pawing, scraping, squeaking and barking. She runs round the straw beds and on top of the banks that I've just fluffed up. Sometimes, she digs so deeply into the straw that all I can see are her piebald hindquarters and tiny tail wagging. It's very

entertaining, except for the muddy pawprints she's left over the interior of my car. I do expect that when it gets wetter and colder, Daisy will resume lying in, all warm and cosy.

Daisy has also spent the summer chasing the new yard cat Oscar. He's a smoky-coloured tabby, now at his scrawny, lanky teenage stage, and lives in the feed room. He flits, skits and gambols around the yard, white-tipped paws pouncing on strands of hay. He will race across the yard with Daisy in hot pursuit, streaking towards the safety of a tree, which he claws up, leaving Daisy yapping at the base.



This season, I 'do' my beloved Arrivederci (Lucky), Gulliver Collonges (Oliver) and Phil The Thrill (Phil), who has run in France and returned much stronger after a break. Whatever happens, I hope we have a great few days racing together.

Hurdlers and Chasers for the season

David Massey

Hello all,
Well, the new season is underway, with Chepstow staging their opening weekend, and a good weekend it was too. Already looking forward to Cheltenham at the end of the month!
As ever, I've been asked to produce a list of a few that I'd hope will be winning races this season. I've kept the bumper horses down to one - it's all too easy to list last year's bumper winners, we know plenty of them will be winning!
Good luck to you all this season and I hope to see many of you at the races.

Hurdlers

Duffle Coat (Gordon Elliott)
The forgotten one from the juveniles from last year, winner of all four starts and it was interesting to see entries for the staying contests at Cheltenham before he had a setback in February, causing him to miss the festivals. Half-brother to both Starchitect and Redemption Song, who stayed 3m, and two Flat spins this summer suggest he retains his ability. I can see him stepping up in trip this year and being a big player in the

staying contests come the spring. Dalamoi (Tim Vaughan)
Easy enough to list a dozen bumper horses, but Dalamoi caught the eye in a major way on debut at Warwick in April. Huge, chasing type that looked sure to get outpaced here, he was only just denied in the closing stages from making a winning debut, and looked sure to improve plenty for hurdles this year. Is a half-brother to Don Poli, and Debecé (useful stayer for this yard, rated in the 140s) and I expect plenty from him in novices this year.

Nightboattoctyro (San Drinkwater)

Very well backed on seasonal reappearance last year and beat Hooper fair and square, form that looks very good now, and followed that up with two more wins at Chepstow and Wetherby before losing his form (although still running respectably) in the spring. Only had the nine hurdles starts, winning four of them, and gives the impression there's still more to come when stepped up in trip slightly. Watch for him first time up, especially if the ground is on

the soft side.

Bear Ghylls (Nicky Martin)

Possible, given his size, he might go chasing this year but his jumping, to an extent, held him back a bit last year and if that can be tidied up a bit, there's still some good races to be won with him over hurdles this season. Ready winner of first three starts before his jumping again cost him a place in the Ballymore but he kept trying all the way to the line regardless, and it would be no surprise if he stepped up in trip this year. Exciting prospect, whatever discipline connections decide to go for.

Peking Rose (Fergal O'Brien)

Unusually for them, connections have taken their time with him (presumably because he's a bit weak) and that could pay off this season. Good fourth in an Ascot bumper and then better still when second to Knappers Hill at Aintree, doing a lot of good late work under patient tactics and looked very much like 2m4f+ will suit him as a novice this year. Loads to come from him as he strengthens up.

Chasers

Beatthebullet (Rebecca Curtis)

Lovely, big gelding that made a good impression when successful at Hereford over hurdles last November, given time to get over that and ran better than his finishing position suggested at Haydock, showing up well for a long way before getting tired. Thrown in at deep end in the Albert Bartlett, unsurprisingly tailed off but I'd expect him to improve a lot for fences this year (has won two Irish points) and can see him making up into one of the better novice chasers.

Quinta Do Mar (Ben Pauling)

Scopey, good-looking gelding that stood out in the paddock at both Market Rasen and Ludlow last year, successful in the latter and should have won at Rasen but maybe the jockey kicked on too soon, and he was caught late on. Not disgraced on handicap debut at Cheltenham, falling at the last when still in touch, and as unexposed as he is, has plenty of potential for fences this season.

Enormouse (Kayley Wollacott)

Split a couple of 120+ rated hurdlers at Chepstow in January (sent off 150-1) and showed that no fluke by running to a similar level back there in March. Has

always looked a chaser and connections wisely not rushing him, as he looks a big baby and in need of time. Might be they give him a spin over hurdles but future lies over fences (and more of a trip, probably 3m+) and although he might not be a star, there are definitely races to be won with him.

Onchan (Nigel Twiston-Davies)

Lovely, lengthy sort that's made for fences (is a brother to Lord Windermere, amongst others); in truth, disappointing that he couldn't get off the mark over hurdles but had issues (treated for post-race ataxia on one occasion) and maybe final Ludlow run was one too many for the year, but

Vote of Thanks

Regretfully, the time has come for **Peter Collier** to step down as a committee member. Peter has long been a valued member of this team and has proved to be instrumental in attaining many excellent guests for our monthly meetings, via his extensive contacts. For this we are very grateful. Peter has also directed our overseas race-meeting ventures; offering advice and local knowledge. Our annual picnic has benefitted from Peter's generosity, too. He usually brings a mountain of asparagus, but

you'd expect him to do a lot better over fences, given that pedigree and his size, so too soon to be giving up on him yet.

Any News (Neil Mulholland)

Looked very useful in bumpers/ novice hurdles early in career but things didn't go his way last year, although the fact he was thrown in at the deep end shows what they thought he was capable of, and he travelled as well as anything in the Swinton; lost nothing in defeat to a race-fit rival at Warwick last month, things again not going his way, and he remains with the potential to make up into a very useful chaser if he can keep his exuberance in check (wore red hood at Warwick, keen).

due to the change of season, this year he treated us to strawberries. We would like to wish Peter every happiness in his new home and again thank him for his steadfast service.

Another person who has left the committee, to whom the club is indebted, is **Mike Lawrence**. Mike has worn several hats during his tenure, from taking and recording minutes to completing the write-ups for meetings and stable visits (which he will continue to help with); all essential tasks that facilitate our club and newsletter. Thank you, Mike.

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Club Events and Magazine are on the website so please keep checking. Please all stay safe in these very testing times.