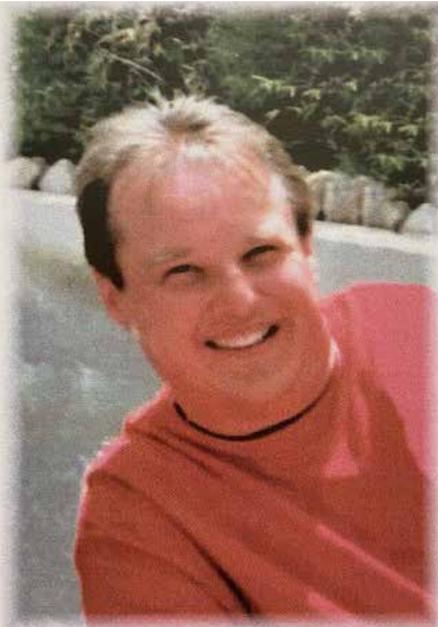


Jan/Feb 2021



FINISH LINE

Cheltenham & Three Counties Race Club



28th March 1961 ~ 5th January 2021

TIPSTER COMPETITION UPDATE: JANUARY With another month of low point scoring, reflecting the effect more to do with prolonged spells of wet weather rather than just Covid-19, it is not surprising that **January recorded the lowest complete month's points total since before 2009** since my detail statistics have been recorded, with just **18 horses** recording a total of **118 points**.

The **Leaderboard** continues to include several regular **Top Ten** participants, with **Jim Clark** grabbing pole position for himself with 223pts to retain his leading position for **January**.

Our 'Congratulations' go to **Jim** who will receive £10 prize.

NB: ALL prizes will be confirmed and paid out after the end of the competition.

#	NAME			JANUARY MONTH	JANUARY CUM'VE
1	JIM	CLARK	A	45	223
2	MICHAEL	OGILVY	G	45	218
3	ALAN	WELLSTEED	G	45	210
4	ALAN	WELLSTEED	A	45	210
5	KEITH	APPLETON	E	30	208
6	ALAN	WELLSTEED	I	30	206
7	NEVILLE	WARD	D	30	200
8	MIKE	TROMANS	D	30	198
9	KEN	WATKINS	C	45	195
10	ALAN	WELLSTEED	L	30	195

The **Highest Score for the Month** has been grabbed by long time Club entrant, **Dave Abbatt**, who scored **over 50%** of the available points with his **60pts**, in his 'A' Entry.

#	NAME			JANUARY MONTH
1	DAVE	ABBATT	A	60
2	KEN	WATKINS	H	55
3	PETER	BATT	A	45

Please don't forget that you can track the status of your entries on-line by using this link https://www.ctcrc.co.uk/tipsters_2020_2021.html

If you have any questions about your entry, or its status, please contact Tony Coleman either on 07795 146242 or by e-mail at tonyandles@aol.com.

RICHARD DAVIS AWARD

For the Top Conditional Jockey riding at Cheltenham, Chepstow, Hereford, Ludlow

Stratford, Warwick and Worcester during the period

7th May 2020 – 24th April 2021

(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 29th January 2021)

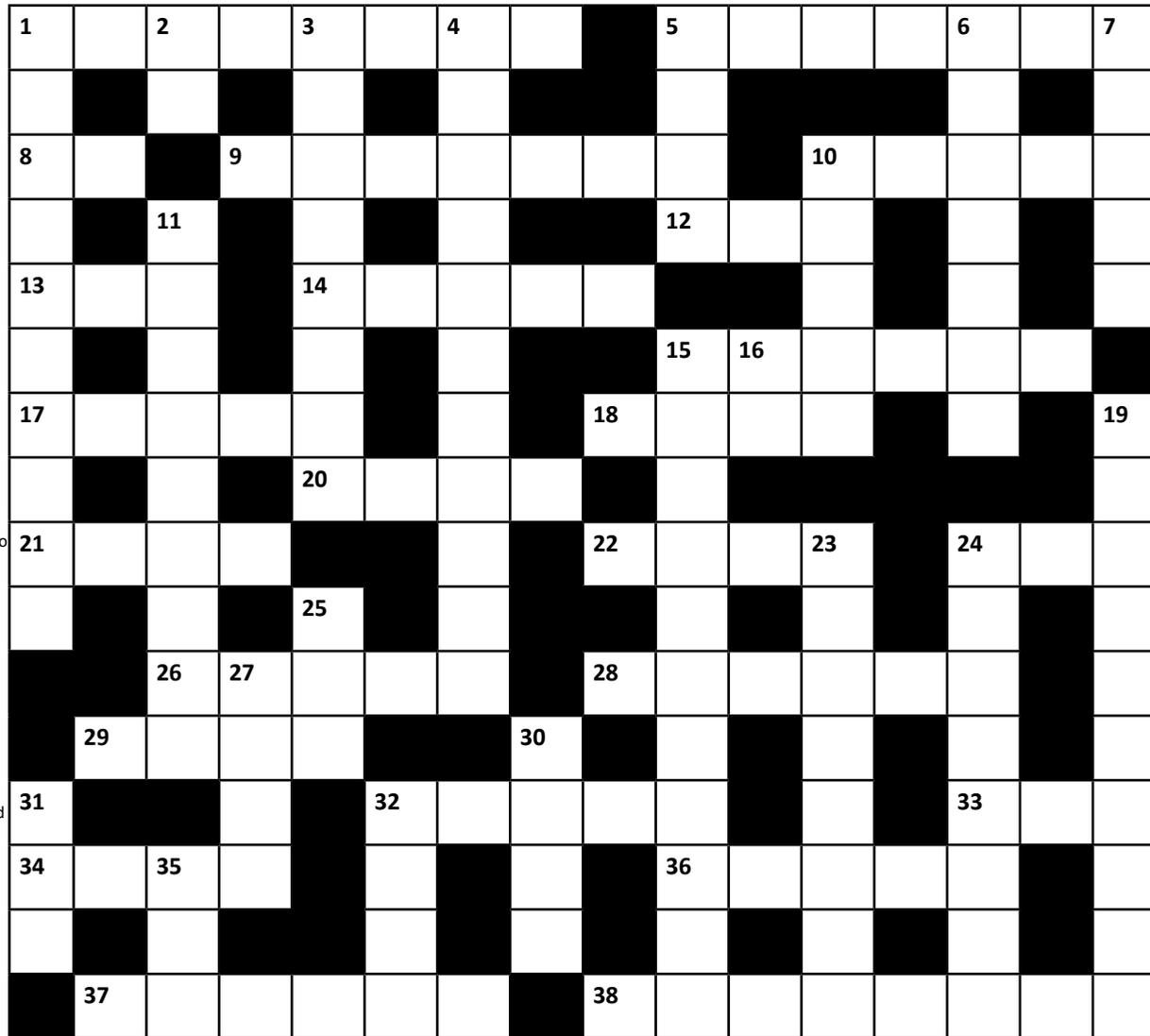
1 st	Bryan Carver	107 pts
2 nd	Max Kendrick	87 pts
3 rd =	Charlie Hammond	79 pts
3 rd =	Lily Pinchin	79 pts
3 rd =	Jack Tudor	79 pts
6 th	Richard Patrick	78 pts
7 th	Connor Brace	74 pts
8 th	Ben Jones	73 pts



ACROSS CLUES

1. The "other half" of Lawney the NH trainer (4.4)
5. Upper part of a horse's hoof (7)
8. Initials of a Welsh based trainer; not a win bet (1.1)
9. A pearl in an American holiday state (7)
10. Getaway Donald (5)
12. Goes in the iron (3)
13. Quantity that constitutes a match (2)
14. Horses downtime location (5)
15. Gin producer and a decent Irish NH trainer – 1st name (6)
17. Crucial supply line for foals from their mares (5)
18. A club for aspiring jockeys (4)
20. Item that could bite (4)
21. A golf tournament or a type of race, both really (4)
22. Not Beef or Salmon; often seen running adjacent to Chepstow, Hexham racecourses etc (4)
24. Regulatory body (1.1.1)
26. Adam Nicol? – no, it's not a jockey but a southern based NH trainer – 1st name (5)
28. 5 career wins for this Johnson so it can't be Dickie – 1st name (6)
29. The L in the HBLB (4)
32. Nines is a racing commentator and presenter – 2nd name (5)
33. Establishment that provides racehorses with a different role (1,1,1)
34. Symbol synonymous with Gigginstown silks (4)
36. A special H. De Bromhead trail blazer (5)
37. 02/12/20 – first jockey (flat) to win in front of spectators since March at Kempton – surname (6)
38. Regal Encore's regular pilot – 2nd name (8)

CROSSWORD



DOWN CLUES

1. Top row of a French keyboard; John Hales owned top 2M chaser (10)
2. Long range bet – initials (1.1)
3. Location of Chipping Norton NH trainer (4.4)
4. Not a small horse and had plenty of activity for Oliver Sherwood in the 90's (5, 6)
5. A horse sometimes looks well in this (4)
6. Ant Noun location for a Gloucestershire based trainer (7)
7. Some horses shy away from these (5)
10. Name of a fish at Jackdaws (5)
11. An iconic obstacle at an Esher track (4, 5)
15. Proceed to completely lose it (2, 9)
16. Not odds against (2)
19. Racing Presenter – surname (10)
23. Stab meat at a function where a speech is delivered (4, 4)
24. Got a wind problem? He's your man (3, 5)
25. A devious female Cambridgeshire trainer - surname (3)
27. Six balls in this; jocks don't want to be this with their weight (4)
30. Oliver Sherwood's assistant – 1st name (4)
31. Venetia Williams mudlark (3)
32. A robe seen at the Knavesmire (4)
35. A condition compliant for some races (3)

Hello all, I hope everyone is keeping safe and is as well as can be expected during these very difficult times. Seeing as some, probably most, of us are having to spend more time at home and consequently have more time on our hands I thought I'd create something different for the newsletter and compile my first ever crossword. "It can't be that difficult" or so I thought.....wrong!! But, hey ho, it's just a bit of fun and might keep the grey matter active for a short period of time. If anyone wants to know the answers before the next newsletter then please email me at sharp056@btinternet.com enjoy, Jamie

John Hales Article

We are very pleased with the progress of the young horses. My horse Eclair Danaïy had an impressive win at Chepstow and is showing plenty of ability. The horses we own with my daughter Lisa, Sir Alex Ferguson and Ged Mason are showing tremendous promise. Look out for Protexterat, Monmiral, Good Ball (will have breathing operation in the Summer and will have a tongue tie for the remaining races this season) and Lakota Warrior. Protektorat is already one of the highest rated novices in the country. I have now watched the Clarence House Chase at Ascot several times. Congratulations to the winner but it may be different at the Festival. Harry Cobden carried out our plan perfectly but unfortunately could not maintain the pace required on soft/heavy ground. It was unfortunate that we were not able to maintain the partnership with Harry Skelton who had produced two wonderful performances in winning the Champion Chase and the Tingle Creek. It now appears that Dan Skelton will have his own runner

in the Champion Chase in March and Harry Skelton is the No 1 Jockey for Dan. My position was if there was to be a change then we should have the same Jockey in the Clarence House and the Champion Chase. It is nice to know that we can now plan for the Champion Chase knowing that Harry Cobden will be our jockey. In March we would hope the going will be good/good to soft. If this is the case then it will be a much faster surface than experienced at Ascot which would be ideal for Politologue. Paul Nicholls also trains Flash Collonges who has already had two impressive wins this season and is owned by the Gi Gi partnership (Margaret Moody David Stevenson and myself) Paul believes this horse will make a really good Chaser. It is possible that our young horses will go to Aintree and not the Festival. They are on a learning curve and the more relaxed atmosphere of Aintree may be more suitable for them. As an owner I would like to congratulate all those people who have kept racing going in very difficult circumstances. We really appreciate the efforts that have been made to make this happen.

Life at Jackdaw's By Jo O'Neill

Despite the coronavirus pandemic continuing, Christmastime was still fun at Jackdaws castle. There was no staff party but we still held elements of it, including bringing back the Jonjo O'Neill Racing Christmas Awards – many of the categories had been voted for by everyone on leaving the yard one lunchtime. There might have been some rigging of these votes, the odd tweak to make it fair and a bit of bias too! For the prizes, I ordered fourteen rosettes in navy and purple to match the yard colours.

The winners were Lauren Hay for the Finest Filly; Moodiest Mare went controversially to Georgia; secretary Jade Aspell won the Loudest in the Yard but mostly due to the tunes she loves belting out whilst on the gallops and Biggest Party Animal went to yard Florin 'Fred' Mirea for his hostel is known as Club Fred most weekends. The votes for Stallion of the Year unanimously went to head of travelling Harrison Day, whereas Best Gelding went to Luis Ruse. I accidentally gave the Best

Groom and Horse Combination to yardie Ionut Gabriel 'Gabby' Ungureanu and Locks Corner, whereas it should've been Gabby and As You Like. The Best Rider and Horse Combination rightly went to head lad Alan Berry and Ashfield Paddy, who is far from easy and has to be ridden out alone. Golden Oldie was won by the other head lad Johnny Kavanagh, Rear of the Year went to Lauren Hall, the Quietest in the Yard to Shannon Bishop and the Wooden Spoon was acquired by Nick Healy, who wore the rosette with pride! Votes for the Yard Clown unanimously went to conditional Phil Armson; Mr and Mrs Jackdaws went to Megan and John Dina, who make a very cute couple. John also won Fall of the Year; he did not receive a rosette but a pair of orange armbands, for his fall was into the pool whilst swimming a horse!

I had worked with Jacqui O'Neill's PA to organise goodie bags for everyone and I had thought of the idea of a mug with a staff photo on, to this we added cones of sweets and a miniatures Whitley Neil gin in a cracker. They were lovely, and a great touch on what, perhaps, was not the

greatest Christmas for people, as many couldn't visit home.

On Christmas Eve, we were told we could wear anything festive instead of our navy Wasdell uniform, which was great fun. There were many Christmas jumpers, antlers, Santa hats and metres of tinsel. It was a bright, fresh morning and everyone was feeling jokey, belting out carols and laughing lots. I grabbed a 'Santa Stop Here' sign and tied it to my coat zip but it flew off halfway up during my first canter!



We had snow at the end of December and again at the end of January. I'm always very negative about snow – admittedly, it looks absolutely beautiful and makes the scenery turn magical. BUT it's so hard to work in. Luckily, head of maintenance Federico Bazan is always quickly out with the snowplough and the grit. He had to pull the jeep out from where

I'd got it stuck in the snow when down at the field horses – in my defence, the 4x4 was broken but I probably was a bit brave to go up the particular track in a few inches of snow!



When cantering, snow compacts up in the horses' hooves and pelts the riders in behind. It's been crushed into balls of ice, so they're lethal. Canter up when it's snowing or sleeting is awful – it feels like a thousand needles jabbing into your face. That's why all riders should wear a good quality moisturiser!

Our recent notable winners have been Annie Mc winning a Listed Mares' chase at Doncaster and Sky Pirate following up his Cheltenham win with another victory at Warwick. Theme Tune (Timmy) won his first race round Ludlow; it was lovely to be able to give owner Trevor Hemmings another winner since



Annie Mc

the Ladbroke Trophy. I've been as far afield as Catterick, Plumpton and Fakenham, without winners but it's still good to be racing throughout this third lockdown. I hope owners are allowed back soon and then the public after that, but if there's talk of the Festival being run 'behind closed doors' then I'm not sure when this will occur.



Joe O'Neill Unsung Hero

Joe O'Neill, the boss' nephew, came over to work here in October 2010, initially coming over to do the Finance. After six years, his role changed to Racing Manager. He has varied jobs dealing with staff, owners and jockeys, all the odds and ends within a racing yard, sales preparation, racing and represents Jonjo on the racetrack. He is also the first friendly face that new staff meet.



Joe, 39, grew up in Castletownroche, County Cork, where his parents, Tom and Breda, train racing greyhounds. Tom is Jonjo's elder brother. During Joe's childhood, he had one dark grey pony called Silver, who bucked off his young rider daily and who Joe credits for him not taking more of an interest in being a rider now! On leaving school, Joe worked

in the payment section of the Barry Group, which is tied in with Costcutter in the UK and stayed there for nine years, with one six-month break when he moved to New York to play football. At home, he also played football for Killavullen and hurling for Castletownroche.



Joe had always supported his Uncle Jonjo, coming to visit in school holidays when Jonjo trained up in Cumbria and was at Aintree when Don't Push It won the Grand National. Celebrations caused him and younger brother Tom Junior to miss their flight home and travel to Gloucestershire for a night.

During Joe's time here, he has seen the yard send out many big winners. He's witnessed winners of this season's Ladbroke

Trophy, World Hurdle, JLT, the Festival four-miler, two Festival wins from Holywell and his Grade 1 Mildmay victory, a Ryanair, a Topham and winner at Royal Ascot and of the Northumberland Plate. All of these days have created many special memories but Joe insists his favourite winners have been Synchronised and More Of That beating Annie Power.

I know that I'm biased as I'm Joe's wife but he really is an unsung hero of the yard, who works tirelessly, often on Sundays too. The lynchpin between yard staff and the office, who works very hard and is a key member of the team.

We met once in the Plough Inn one November and again at a hunt ball in his first month of moving over here – a memory Joe can recollect a lot more clearly than I can! We married in May 2018 on a beautiful sunny day.



He is a Newcastle United fan and, though he loves my little Jack Russell Daisy, his beloved pet is Hughie, Jonjo's dog. His favourite meal is steak and chips, and preferred drink is Bacardi and diet coke. Since Joe's 'retirement' from football and hurling, he's taken part in five and ten kilometre runs, including ones round London. With the exception of last year, Joe loves returning to Cork to visit friends and family, hang out with the greyhounds, cattle and broodmares on the family farm, as well as his nephews and niece.



Stay well, stay safe.

See you all racing soon.

Jo O'Neill

Colin Nelson

A small group from CTCRC attended Colin's funeral on Friday 5th February. We sent a link out to members and I am glad to hear that a number of you watched it. If you did not the link is available for 28 days. Here are the very difficult words I managed to write on behalf of CTCRC.

Colin was a long standing member of Cheltenham and Three Counties Race Club and has been the Treasurer since 2003 a job he filled with ease and he will be hard to replace. As a Committee member he brought his knowledge and enthusiasm to every meeting with a cheeky grin and an infectious laugh. Each Chairman also benefitted from this as he supported them into the job. The members will remember him for his very good-humour and friendliness. If popping round to Colin's

to get a cheque signed or to discuss some detail about the club you could guarantee that the racing would be on the television and a conversation would be had about the day's runners even though he was very rarely at a racecourse. When entering the room for one of the monthly meetings Colin could always be heard talking and laughing away to someone and it is good to hear that the laugh still continues with Graham. Colin will be sadly missed and all of the members and committee of CTCRC send their deepest condolences and sympathy to Graham and family. Some of the member's comments: 'He was such a lovely person always with a smile on his face and a welcome when we met him at The Club.' 'Colin was a good man who always took the time to have a chat with me. I will always remember his cheerful,

smiling face.' 'He was quite simply one of the nicest people I met through racing. Always bubbling.' 'We never saw Colin without a smile.' 'Colin was such a happy and jolly person and always had a smile on his face. Cheerful and energetic is a fitting tribute to him.' 'Colin was a wonderful individual who could be relied on to advise, guide and help. He was always good humoured, genial, approachable and knowledgeable.' 'I am really shaken by the news. He seemed fit the last time I spoke to him.' 'He was always chirpy and friendly whenever we spoke to him.' 'Colin was always friendly and welcoming and did a great job as the Club's Treasurer. Rest in Peace Colin from all at CTCRC xx

David Massey Article

It's nearly here! Hooray! Who's going to The Festival? That's right, none of us!

Look, I know things can change between now and the middle of March, but it isn't looking like we are getting a crowd any time soon, and this year is going to see the strangest of Festivals.

Nevertheless, the show will go on, and there will be winners and losers, and here are my thoughts on the three of the Championship races.

Tuesday - Champion Hurdle

Before Christmas, it looked very much like Epatante's race to lose, but her defeat at Kempton showed the first signs of chinks in her armour. An attacking ride from Adam Wedge on Silver Streak had Epatante on the back foot even before she

made a bad mistake three out, and she was never able to get in a telling blow at the winner.

If - if - that was no more than an off day then you're getting a great price about Epatante, but it showed she isn't as bombproof as we thought she was, and it gives hope to her opponents that there are ways of getting her beaten.

Silver Streak himself looks sure to run his usual game race, but if we are saying he's in the firing line then so too does Tom Symonds' Song For Someone, who was giving Silver Streak 2lb when getting the better of him in the International Hurdle.

I'm a big fan of Symonds and it is a delight to see Song For Someone improve this year. He has two key assets - one, he stays further than two miles, and two, his jumping is deadly accurate. That Cheltenham win put to bed any notions he's a flat track horse and he comes into this on an upward curve, which in truth you can't say for many.

Sharjah, like Silver Streak, has the t-shirt and looked as good as ever when winning the Matheson Hurdle at Leopardstown. Aspire Tower finished second and probably ran his best race to date, and might have more to offer, but I'd expect Sharjah to confirm that form come March. He'll look a solid each-way option on the day, with firms falling over themselves to offer extra places.

Saint Roi and Abracadabras both have good Cheltenham form to their name but had their limitations exposed by Sharjah, and have more to do. Honeysuckle is likely to go for the Mares, along with Concertista, and former champion Buveur D'Air needs to find an awful lot on his comeback run at Haydock when second to Navajo Pass. Yes, he'll come on plenty for it, but he isn't getting any quicker and that form is a mile away from what's required here. It's always difficult winning a crown back once you've lost it as well, and he isn't hard to pass over.

I suppose, of those priced at 33s and bigger, Buzz makes some appeal. His form so far is just handicap form, but it is very solid handicap form, and what he will do is travel well. In fact, the faster they go the better for him and it isn't hard to see him hard on the bridle two out. What happens from that point, well, only time will tell, but he's improving with every start and with another step forward, it isn't hard to see him running well here.

Wednesday - Champion Chase

As some of you know, I write a few pieces for The Daily Punt and at the beginning of the season, put up Fanion D'Estruval for this after his second to Magic Saint at Cheltenham. That drew a few snorts of derision, but the point I made - that this was a division begging to be blown wide open - has been shown to be right.

Those that headed the betting at the time were all established,

with little left in the locker and whilst their best form would be good enough to win a Champion Chase, those days were becoming more sparse and less predictable.

There's little point raking over the form of Defi Du Seuil and Altior this year - both fit in to that previous bracket with ease these days, and whilst neither can ever be discounted, equally backing either with hard cash carries plenty of risk. Politologue, under attacking rides, looked the one to beat until First Flow took him to the cleaners at Ascot in the Clarence House and he too is clearly beatable.

Nube Negra and the aforementioned First Flow are the two that have come from leftfield to challenge for the title. Nube Negra was oh-so-impressive in the jumping stakes when panning Altior in the Desert Orchid and that slick jumping is clearly his major asset. He spent no time at all in the air, skipping over his fences

and gaining ground, and if he is as effective at Cheltenham as he is on a flatter track, then for me he holds the best chance of the English runners.

First Flow too will have to prove himself at Cheltenham but whereas Nube Negra looks all about speed, First Flow looks more about stamina. Now, that's no bad thing when you're looking for a Champion Chase winner but I do worry that he might get slightly taken off his feet in the first half of the contest, especially if it dries up. A wet weather CC brings him into play, but I'll be waiting for the day rather than backing him ante post.

Chacun Pour Soi remains the one to beat, but even he has his foibles. There's been times when he's not been the quickest away from the back of his fences, and he can still make a mistake mid-race seemingly out of nowhere, but his form this year has been difficult to knock. He too has to prove himself at Prestbury, though, and quotes of around

even money do nothing for me. And finally, what of my original pick, Fanion D'Estruval? If you had said that, going into the Clarence House, he'd finish alongside Waiting Patiently and two lengths behind Politologue, I'd have been delighted. Sadly for my pocket, First Flow was ten lengths in front of the lot of them, but nevertheless it was another step forward. I'm probably playing for a place, but he has the requisite stamina and as long as his low-slung jumping style holds up, I should get a run for my money.

Friday - Gold Cup

Can Al Boum Photo make it three in a row and arguably become one of the greats? He'd be one of the most understated of greats if he does, but in a year when many of his opponents have blotted their copybooks in lots of different ways, he's the one that keeps on churning out the wins and doing nothing wrong.

The latest of those came

at Tramore in their Savills Chase, where some called him workmanlike but the bottom line is that he beat Acapella Bourgeois by three times as far as he beat him in the same race the year before, so it was hardly a poor performance. He'll go straight to Cheltenham off the back of that, and he fulfils Rule Number 1 when looking for Festival winners - look for previous Festival form - with aplomb. He looks the most likely winner.

One by one the English runners have managed to mess up their trials. Lost in translation, like so many from his yard, looks a shadow of the horse he was last year and can't be backed with any confidence. Santini looked less than cooperative at times when second to Lake View Lad at Aintree and then a stop-start King George didn't suit him at all. He could bounce back, with the demands of this race up his street, but you couldn't guarantee it.

Frodon, for all that he's game

and genuine, isn't going to get his own way up front here as he did when winning the King George, and stamina doubts for this still remain. Native River could only really be considered if it's a mudbath, but the fact that an 11yo is even mentioned for this only shows how weak the home challenge is.

Minella Indo's fall in the Savills Chase (the Leopardstown version) is hardly what you want to see going in to a Gold Cup, and on that, Delta Work doesn't look good enough either. Presenting Percy was well held and looks fully exposed now. Kemboy set a really good pace and was only worn down late by A Plus Tard, but his Cheltenham record is enough to put me off. As for A Plus Tard, I have to say I have always pegged him at a 20f horse, so that win came as a bit of a surprise. I'm reluctant to say he won't get further, but it is a concern.

Is there room for something at a big price to sneak into the

frame here? Quite possibly and on that, step forward The Conditional, David Bridgwater's likeable 9yo.

He's got the best part of a stone and a half to find on form, but he has plenty of plus points - he'll stay, he's 2-2 at Cheltenham, including a win in the Ultima last year, he's still improving, acts on most ground and unlike many in this, is consistent. I can see him outperforming his current mark and running a big one!

Stay safe, and I hope to see you all when this awful disease is finally back under control.

David.

Editor: It is going to be really hard not going to The Festival if it is behind closed doors. I expect most of us have booked the time off work anyway

'just in case'

Q&A with Fay Shulton

This month's Q&A features Fay Shulton who works for Nigel Twiston-Davies as Head Travelling girl. She is 27 years of age, joined NTD in 2012 and has been in her current role for the last 2 years. The Committee would like to thank Fay for her time in compiling the Q&A and giving us an insight into her role.



Q - How and where did you first become interested in horses?

A - It was back home in Essex when I was about 7 years old. I lived in the country side and many of the girls at my primary school had their own ponies

or had riding lessons, so I was very interested. I was lucky that my parents then took me to the local riding stables for lessons. Then a few years later I got my own pony and then a horse as I got older.

Q - What ultimately inspired you to take up working at a racing stable?

A - I knew nothing about horse racing growing up. It all started when I left equine college I wasn't sure what to do. I knew I wasn't ready for a full time job in the world but wasn't interested in uni. I saw that there was an open morning for the British Racing School in Newmarket, so I went along and when they said they could put me on the 9 week course I thought this will kill a few weeks so I don't have to make the adult decision on finding a full time job. During the course I fell in love with racing and that's when they found me a job at Nigel Twiston-Davies's yard and I have never left since.



Q - What are your tasks associated with your current role as travelling head girl?

A - The tasks I have to do involve cleaning all the tack that would come back from a day's racing, which would be bridles, breastplates, jockeys pads and washing the silks. Which when it is very muddy (typical national hunt racing) can be a bit of a mission to get them looking clean. Also involved is packing the correct racing kit when it's clean to head off ready for the next day's racing and make sure all grooms and horses have the correct kit they all need for a race day.

Q - How many horses do you

look after in the yard, which ones are they and what are their characteristics?

A - I currently look after 5 horses who are:-

Calett Mad - he is a beautiful big power house who likes to remind me of that every day when I'm riding him, he definitely helps me with that summer body.

Muckamore - another giant boy, he is extremely kind and sweet. I do say he isn't the smartest and acts as if he has a goldfish in his head but makes me laugh everyday. I call him my best friend.

Felissimus - new to my team this season but has slotted in great, he is always happy and is the one I would get a cuddle from if I was having a down moment.

Bitontheside - tiny little girl acts more like a tomboy. Can be very playful riding and in the stable, favourite game is to see how quickly she can steal my woolly hat. I also looked after her mum when she was in training as one of the first race horses I had here. So she's part of the family.

GingerDuVal - another little lady but this one has more of an attitude we call her the independent lady who doesn't need a man.



Q - I believe that staff shouldn't have their favourites within the yard but who has been your favourite horse to date and why?

A - There will always be one and that is Blaklion. I looked after him from day one when he was at Nigel's and rode him everyday, even if I had a busy day racing I would come in early to ride him before leaving. We had the best days racing together and ticked off many big wins most grooms dream of winning. Including RSA at Cheltenham festival 2016 and the Becher chase at Aintree, and not forgetting his incredible 4th in the grand national. I dreamt

of looking after a horse that good to be entered in races like those, let alone run that well in them.

Q - Who have you learnt the most from within the yard and how did that person help you?



A - Rachael Phillips. Rachael would always have the answer to any of my questions, she was always happy to help and teach me from when I first started and I was clueless when I first arrived. She would also be excellent at giving me confidence when I was nervous riding or ever doubt myself. I always said she was my safety blanket when riding together. I would follow her round in

the racing tack room watching everything she did. It was her idea to pass the role onto me when she left Nigel's a couple of years ago, as she had great confidence that I knew what I was doing but only because I learnt from the best. Rachael is the kindest and most helpful person and I am so thankful that she only lives over the road so I am still in contact with her.



Q - Which is your favourite racecourse and why?

A - Cheltenham, which is where I had my biggest lead up wins there, making the best memories. I also, in my first season, was very lucky to have my first lead up and winner there all in one day.

Q - Which is your least favourite racecourse and why?

A - Worcester, only because I had one of my saddest days racing there. The downside to the job when coming home with an empty lorry.

Q - Best horse you have ridden?

A - Blaklion and I wouldn't let anyone else ride him unless Ryan Hatch would come in to school him.



Q - Favourite TV racing presenter/summariser?

A - Alice Plunkett and Luke Harvey. The pair always provide a proper insight into the horses understanding and every detail that goes into them. I also like how they talk with the grooms and jockeys and go behind the scenes at the races, letting the public know what really is going on and lets them get up close to the animal.

Q - What is a typical race day for you?

A - It would start the evening before where I would have had all the racing kit ready for each horse running the next day and double checking that I haven't forgotten anything. Then race day I would start work about 5:30 muck out, fresh hay and water my 5 horses I look after. Then depending on what time the lorry would leave I would ride a couple of horses out. Then load up the lorry with all the kit for the horses, put their travel bandages on, get them on the lorry and set off to the races. We arrive at the races 2 hours before the first horses race, get them settled in with fresh water and remove their travel kit. I would then take the jockeys silks and pads to the weighing room then head back to the horse and get them plaited up and brushed looking very smart in the racing kit. I would then take the horse to the paddock ready for the jockey to then race. After the race we wash off then check the horse is all ok. When everyone is happy

we load everything back up and head home. Depending on which racecourse we can be home early or sometimes very late. Then put the horse to bed, I would clean all the racing tack from that day and then when clean repack it ready for the following day.

Q - What are your hobbies?

A - Since Pigeon Island retired I borrow him in my summer holidays so I love taking him hacking and on fun rides.



Q - Favourite holiday location?

A - Thailand, I love the beaches with the warm sea water.

Q - Pet hate(s)?

A - Noisy eaters and people that don't support others.

Q - Food heaven and food hell?

A - Heaven is all food but I love seafood which is one of my favourites. Hell would be tomatoes and milk.

Q - Who do you turn to for advice?

A - Same as earlier, Rachael Phillips, she has always given me great advice, and I know I can always ring her for any help.



Q - If you could ride one horse currently in training which one would it be and why?

A - Again it would have to

be Blaklion; He was sold and moved to Dan Skelton's a couple years ago, I miss riding him so much.

A horse though that I've never ridden and would like a spin on would be Epatante, the speed she can suddenly unleash I would love to have that feeling up the gallop on a work morning.

Q - What do you think racecourses could do better to make stable staff's experience better?

A - I think that one of the biggest items for me is just respect, they all like to promote that stable staff are the ones to keep the game going, but when we are doing our job I have experienced being spoken down to like I have no idea what I'm doing. Also, the hospitality for stable staff at some courses is shocking. They wouldn't dream of treating the jockeys the way we sometimes are looked after.

Q - Given that there appears to be a regular shortage within racing of stable staff, what could

racings/trainers do better to alleviate this problem?

A - A lot of yards don't have accommodation for the staff or it is in a poor condition. As housing is so expensive to rent or buy I'm very lucky to have my own private place on the yard but if Nigel didn't have this I wouldn't be able to afford to live in the area so I wouldn't be able to work here.

Q - Which horse from the yard should we keep a lookout for the future?

A - 'I Like To Move It' - He has been very impressive in his 2 winning starts in bumpers. He's a nice sized horse so would be very exciting in a couple years when he is jumping.

Q - Fast forward 10 years - what would you ideally like to be doing?

A - I really enjoy what I'm doing but if I could just do the travelling to the races with the horses and scrapping the mucking yard/groom job, I would be very happy. I love taking them to the races and

making them look smart, I always feel very proud when they look a million.

By Jamie Sharp



Gallops 2013



Calett Mad



Blaklion

Voluntary Job Vacancies

Treasurer.

Does anyone have the necessary skills to fill the big hole left with the death of Colin Nelson. When I say big hole I really meant it. He has been our treasurer since 2003 and has been the perfect treasurer. A friendly cheery face and never complaining.

Committee Members.

Is anyone willing to join the committee. Regular meetings and input on the way the club is to go forwards.

Events

As I keep saying:

Zoom: There are some zoom talks in the pipeline and they will be done as soon as I have time.

Stable Visits: These are obviously on hold at the moment and I do have some which have agreed when we are allowed out to play. I have a list of members all ready to go.

AGM: I am thinking of trying to do this via zoom having seen some go ahead this way. If you would like the link when I organise it please email me ctcrcchairman@gmail.com. It is meant to be before March 1st This is notice and it will be after March 1st - Apologies for that.

Main point: moving membership to start in September

Donation: We will be giving a donation in memory of Colin to the families chosen charity which is 'Great Western Air Ambulance' but if you wish to send your own please mention In memory of Colin Nelson CTCRC

Take care and stay safe Sarah xx

Memories



Publication No. 339 - Mid Winter 2020

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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.