

Snapshot

Pharly Green, due to run in NH Flat races, is completing her roadwork programme with Sheena Hill who says "She's really strengthened up now"

Young man on a mission

Paddy Merrigan is Peter Bowen's first ever conditional jockey.

Paddy, who is 20 and hails from Athlone in Ireland, came to Yet-y-Rhug in June with over 40 winners to his credit. Until he reaches 75 winners, the horses he rides get an allowance of three pounds off the weight they carry in races. "I'm hoping to get some good chances as Mr Bowen's conditional" he says.

He got the chance on Iron Man in the big Summer Plate Chase, scoring his first win for the stable and the biggest of his career so far.

Although 6 feet tall, Paddy weighs in at less than 10 stones. To keep fully fit, he runs every day, and says he always eats "healthy"! Paddy is thoroughly enjoying living and working for Peter in Pembrokeshire.

An exceptionally dedicated individual, Paddy is looking forward to choice rides from



Paddy Merrigan - the yard's first conditional jockey

the yard in the next few months. "I've always been mad keen on riding, my parents weren't horsey at all. My first word when I was 3 was "horse". Paddy started as a flapping jockey in Ireland, and started his first job when he was 9 riding point-to-pointer, eventers and showjumpers and is now generally regarded as one of the leading conditional jockeys in Britain.

A very Happy Christmas and New Year from everyone at Homebred Racing

The last sales bargains?



In the ring at Tattersalls sales

We often compare racing to the music industry - a few superstars at the top make a fortune whilst the rest are all wannabes. This pursuit of 'the dream' puts a totally unrealistic gloss on the whole industry. Bloodstock at the top end of the market continues to fetch record prices for horses to be trained in pursuit of ever diminishing prizemoney. We constantly hear of general dissatisfaction with prizemoney and very vocal threats citing this as the reason to quit or cut back. But point - to - pointing, where costs are only marginally less expensive, continues to boom even though prizes are in the tens rather than thousands of pounds. There are equally loud complaints about too much racing reducing the quality - but the reality is that lower grade races are just as competitive. And there's no lack of entries because, despite an increasing of fixtures, the number of horses balloted out of races also continues to rise. Personally I doubt that levels of prizemoney have any bearing on whether owners want to be involved or not. Of course it would be great to have big prizes - but just to be involved is the thrill - and to

win is the dream. The potential problem to racing's pyramid of endeavour is that it's all built on sand. The breeders who provide the competitors are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet. Latest statistics show that the cost of breeding a foal, raising it to sell as a yearling average £19,000. But average prices for youngsters at the sales are less than £10,000 meaning breeders are averaging a loss of £9,000 for every youngster sold. These unsustainable economics ultimately make a correction inevitable and mean that as breeders cut back, sales prices will inevitably rise.



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THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER FROM HOMEBRED RACING

DECEMBER/2007

Channel 4 racing back on track

Racing coverage on Channel 4 no longer faces the chop as at least three firms have confirmed they have registered a bid to replace the long-time sponsor Totesport. Betfair, Paddy Power and television services provider Satellite Information Services (SIS) have all confirmed their interest.

Bookmaking firm Bet365 has also been named as a potential bidder as well. A Channel 4 spokesperson said: "Channel 4 racing is back in a strong position. We can confirm we have had several offers from both in and outside the betting world and that racing coverage will be going ahead next year."

A spokesperson for Betfair, the online gaming company heavily tipped to replace the Tote, whose deal finishes at the close of 2007, said: "I can confirm that we have put in a bid to sponsor Channel 4 racing and we are waiting to hear back."

Irish bookmaking firm Paddy Power and SIS have also confirmed their interest. From 1 September, due to a change in the advertising laws, betting firms have been allowed to advertise around racing broadcasts.



Winning broodmares Snowy Mantle (foreground) and Gran Clicquot enjoy some autumn grass after both being tested in foal.

Homebred mares in foal

Two new arrivals are expected in March after Snowy Mantle and Gran Clicquot were both confirmed in foal on October 1st. Snowy Mantle is in foal to Group 1 winner Septieme Ciel - a son of the great Seattle

Slew out of Maximova who was also a Group 1 winner in France. Triple flat winner Gran Clicquot is in foal to Royal Ascot winning sprinter Superior Premium who has already sired some sharp

types from very limited opportunities. It'll be interesting to see if either produce a grey foal - although greys are always born chesnut and change coat colour in the first few months.

Did you know?

The 2008 Lincoln will be brought forward to Easter Saturday to ensure it's on the opening day of the turf season.

The ideal Xmas gift

A share in a racehorse makes a wonderful gift that lasts a year!
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Memorable Quotes "The best day of my life"

Kieren Fallon on his Arc win on the eve of his Old Bailey trial



2 courses achieve gold

Market Rasen has become one of the latest racecourses, now with Hamilton, to join the prestigious ranks of ROA Gold Standard Award holders. Market Rasen's prizemoney this year is worth over £975,000. Their executive and sponsorship contributions for the past 12 months stand at 16.6% of their overall prizemoney pool.

Pip Kirkby, Managing Director of Market Rasen, said: "We always do our utmost to provide a warm welcome and excellent hospitality for racehorse owners. We have also invested in facilities for their horses and the training staff who look after them.



Market Rasen - new award winner

So, to be among the first racecourses to receive the ROA's Gold Standard Award, alongside the likes of Epsom Downs and Haydock Park, makes us very proud" **Gold Standard Racecourses are:** Beverley, Epsom Downs, Hamilton, Haydock Park, Goodwood, Market Rasen, Newbury, Pontefract, Wincanton, York.



Grand National runners at the Canal Turn. Oil on canvas 30 x 44 inches.

Captured on canvas

Peter Smith's work as one of the world's leading thoroughbred painters represents the culmination of his lifelong fascination with horses.

Born in Lanarkshire in 1949, Peter's early interest in art and painting was matched by his passion for horses. He can trace his obsession with the equine form back to his childhood when he would stand transfixed by the sight of gypsies travelling through the village with their ponies. "When you're up on the gallops in the early morning, with the sun just rising, and you hear the horses coming towards you over the horizon - with a thunder of hooves and ready to explode - it's like something you've never seen or heard before. There is a magic about those horses,



Study of 2 Arabs

glistening in the early sun at their most alive - a sense of incredible controlled power." Peter's artistic abilities were spotted and honed by the senior art teacher at his High School, who provided him with materials and instructed him how to copy works by masters such as Stubbs, Degas and Munnings. "I had never made the connection between horses and art until I saw a Degas of a racehorse. I realized I could put these two things together."

Peter went on to attend both the Carlisle College and the Glasgow School of Art, before joining a rock band and leaving painting behind for two years. He then married Margery, his childhood sweetheart and settled in Ayr where Peter would often see the horses crossing the road from the Cree Lodge stables - which re-ignited his passion for horses and painting.

His oil paintings have an outstanding sense of colour, excitement and speed. Recent commissions have included an ongoing series of Arab horse subjects, which Peter feels has brought him in full circle - the Arabian being the ancestor of the thoroughbred. The Homebred Racing office (01293) 884433 can provide further detailed information about Peter and his work.

Great recovery

Jockey JP McNamara was warned by doctors that he might never walk again following career-ending spinal injuries from a fall at Bangor in April, 2006. His recovery has been nothing short of miraculous. He has been at home near Brackley again for several months, can walk upstairs to bed and is planning to buy and sell horses after purchasing some land close to his family home in Ireland. He has also been on holiday in Egypt and Australia. Even on the darkest days in hospital the fact that he had some, albeit limited, feeling in his hands and feet gave him hope. It also helped that the IJF has been with him from the start, helping where they could, and arranging for his family to come over from Ireland on a regular basis.

Later, as he defied medical opinion by the speed of his recovery, the IJF stepped in to pay fees costing around £1,000 a night as he worked with ferocious determination under supervision in the gym at the Spinal Injuries and Rehabilitation Centre. Like so many victims of bone crunching falls, JP has been forced to face life with out riding. But self-pity is not on his agenda. He says: "I still think I was very lucky. I was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. I always had a feeling I'd be OK, that I'd get to where I wanted to be. There aren't any doors in front of me I cannot open." Despite his deserved popularity he remains a reluctant hero and prefers to retreat from the limelight. It was entirely typical of this outstanding young man that in April he agreed to wind up the trust fund set up for him after his accident. Others, he suggested, were more in need of assistance.

For more. www.ijf.org.uk.



An enthusiastic crowd at this year's Cheltenham Festival.

Racing tackles the popularity stakes...

Leaders of the world's top racing countries came together on the eve of Royal Ascot to consider the way ahead for the sport. This think-tank included representatives from the UK, Australia, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, UAE and USA. Their purpose was simple: to look at how racing should try to attract the next generation of racegoers, and whether that should be done globally. Racing exists in a growing and ever competitive market with global sports revenues jumping from £32 billion in 2000 to £49.5 billion this year and to an estimated £55.5 billion by 2009. From three streams - gate money, TV rights, and sponsorship/merchandising - it was found that sponsorship is the biggest money spinner as well as the fastest growing one. UK horseracing creates £0.8 billion in expenditure, a sum that is higher than that earned by global tennis (£0.7 billion) or global rugby union (£0.55 billion) - although somewhat behind European football which has an estimated revenue of £11.75 billion. The complex nature of funding for British racing can be seen when compared to other sports and global horseracing. Media rights account for only 14% of British racing's revenue compared to up to 45% for the top five European football leagues.

Britain attracts around six million racegoers a year. That compares to 32.8 million in the US, 18.7 million in Japan, 5.3 million in Australia, 1.9 million in both France and Hong Kong and 1.5 million in Ireland. Other leisure activities in the UK, such as cinemas, attracted an annual 171 million annual visits, while 100 million people went to bingo, 38 million to football and 12.3 million to casinos. Crucially these other activities would have also attracted many more returning customers than racing. Whether racecourses should invest more in prize-money or their facilities is reflected in how attendances are affected by stadia investment. Comparing the UK and Italy, where the grounds tend to be owned by local government and where there has been no significant improvements since the 1990 World Cup, attendances at English football grounds are booming - but in Italy, they are dropping.

Did you know?

The lowest rated Group 1 winner was Feevagh, who won the Yorkshire Oaks in 1954, rated just 103

Blue tongue sounds a warning shot...

Bird flu and blue tongue virus are exotic new diseases which sound a warning for the racing industry. Disruption to the programme has already been caused by foot and mouth which doesn't even affect horses directly. It may just be that greater vigilance and better testing is finding bugs which may often have been present without causing a problem, but the dangers to racing are clear. Already this year Australian racing has been badly disrupted by an outbreak of equine influenza - and African Horse

Sickness (AHS) is a constant threat in South Africa. AHS is alarmingly similar to blue-tongue virus in that it is spread by biting insects and it's now clear from problems in cattle that these vectors can soon spread - even across open sea. AHS reached Spain in 1990 where the outbreak was contained. Experts now believe it's not a question of whether new diseases will reach our shores - but when. Racing's administrators are now working on how best to respond when an outbreak occurs.

Course Factfile: Exeter

A demanding 2 mile circuit, which is acknowledged as a good, fair, galloping track, has proved ideal for introducing the stars of the future to the challenges of jump racing; hence its choice for the debuts of greats like Desert Orchid and Best Mate. Exeter has twice been awarded the Neil Wyatt Award for the best National Hunt Course in the past seven years. Exeter (renamed from Devon and Exeter in 1992) is a right-handed course, two miles round and fairly stiff, providing a good test of stamina. After the downhill stretch in the back straight (where the horses disappear from view), the track rises steadily up the straight to the finish.

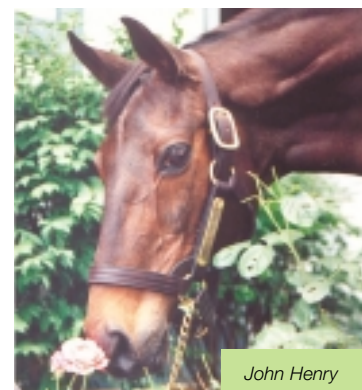
Major race: Haldon Gold Cup



Celebrations: If you're an owner travelling from afar **The Culm Valley** at Culmstock offers bed and breakfast but is principally worth a stop off the M5 for the food and its good selection of wines. Sophisticated this isn't - but still enjoyable (Tel: 01884 840354). West of Exeter **The Nobody Inn** at Doddiscombeleigh is a reliable place for good food and an extraordinary range of drinks (Tel: 01647 252394). They also offer b & b here which is handy for owners.

A tribute to John Henry

John Henry was a horse that gives every owner hope - he was bought for less than £750 as a yearling and passed through several pairs of hands before ending up in the care of trainer Ron McNally. The rest is history - because John Henry went on to win an amazing 39 races, no less than 19 of which were Grade or Group 1s, amassing over \$6,500,000 in prizemoney. He won his last Group 1 race at the age of 9. John Henry died recently at the age of 32 having enjoyed a long and happy retirement. He was one of the most popular and



John Henry

successful horses to ever set foot on a racecourse. His jockey Chris McCarron said "He meant the world to me and my family".

Know your rules: So what is inside information?

Essentially it's information available to you as a result of your position as an owner, which is not in the public domain - and so could be exploited for your own financial benefit. For instance, if your horse has missed vital work before a race he may not run to form and so you could place a bet on him losing. Or if your horse is expected to show improved form for any specific reason you could back him at disproportionately long odds to win. There are severe penalties for those who fall foul of the

Rules of Racing in relation to inside information. Here are some of the issues explained:

It's a breach of the Rules of Racing for an owner to lay to lose any horse he owns. But can a spouse/partner/relative/business partner?

Owners should ensure that they safeguard inside information relating to horses that they own. Whilst it might not be a specific breach of the rules for a spouse/partner/relative/business partner, the

owner of the horse may well be in breach of Rule 243 if they have passed on inside information for the purposes of laying it to lose.

Can an owner lay a horse not in their ownership that they may have inside information about - for example if it is trained in the same yard?

Under the new Code, owners must refrain from laying any horse from a yard where they have a horse in training.

Can an owner back other horses in a race in which they have a runner, particularly where the horses are with the same trainer?

Yes. An owner is permitted to back any horse to win in any race.

Where can owners go for further guidance?

The Orders and Rules of Racing are available on-line at www.britisshorseracing.com.