



Paul Flynn with his coveted prize

Paul Flynn's new skills as a trainer

Jockey Paul Flynn was a regular rider for us and struck up a great partnership with our staying hurdler Prince de Galles who was trained by Peter Bowen. In fact, although many top riders including Jim Culloty and Mick Fitzgerald tried, only Paul could get him to perform to his best by employing exaggerated waiting tactics.

Amongst his successes Prince de Galles won the Carling Hurdle by 28 lengths! After retiring from race riding Paul returned to Ireland and started training from his small base in Longford where he can only stable 25 horses. But Paul has already captured Ireland's top jumping prize - The Galway

Hurdle at his first attempt with 20-1 shot Moon Dice. Paul says "He's not far off top class and I hope has more good prizes in him". Paul often sends winners over the water to capture prizes on English and Scottish tracks - a good jockey who may prove to be an even better trainer.



This way... according to SatNav!

Heavy going!

We've all heard weird and wonderful stories about SatNav directing lorries up roads they can't fit and persuading coach-drivers to take to water. Now Homebred can confirm another case. We were alerted by the sound of screaming tyres from the proverbial white van trying to climb the steep muddy track towards the fields where our mares are turned out. True to

form, SatNav had persuaded Home Delivery that the shortest way to our neighbours is through our fields. Which it is - on foot. But there's an almost perpendicular 150 foot drop beyond our boundary. Although our neighbours are only 2 fields away, it's actually over 4 miles by road! At least it gave the mares some memorable Friday afternoon entertainment!

Tell it how it is!

Tony Mans, Senior racing journalist, vents his views

"Our sport is in disarray from top to bottom and it has been on a downward spiral since the opportunity to create a Tote monopoly was squandered 50 years ago. We gave the game to the bookmakers, who have done with it what they please, and almost every development since has been for the worse, or so it seems to us old-timers.

The Jockey Club, having ruled the sport for 250 years, became an estate management company, leaving us at the mercy of businessmen and marketing folk with no understanding of the horse, of racing and of the traditions that stood us in such good stead for so long".

Racing fights back

After the disastrous sale of the Tote, which could have provided on-going funding for racing, two racecourses are to set up their own in-house betting service. Chester and Bangor are to become the first racecourses to replace the existing Tote betting service now owned by bookmakers BetFred. For too long racing has bent over backwards to accommodate the bookies - even the race times and the type of races are all currently framed just to suit them, but the bookies consistently fail to deliver their part of the bargain... funding. Chester and Bangor will use the services of Bristol based Datatote taking over at the track and bringing new technology and ideas. Richard Thomas, MD of the 2 tracks says: "Now that the Tote is owned by BetFred our existing contract with the Tote was ended". This move may be the start of racing's fight-back with the bookies and should secure income from betting for individual courses to make improvements and also improve prizemoney.

Let us have your ideas and views

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WINNING POST

THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER FROM HOMEBRED RACING

SPRING 2012



Celestial Bay (left) with big sister Polarity

Get ready to jump!

It's been a while since Homebred Racing has had jumpers in training. But these two are half sisters out of our winning miler Snowy Mantle who is also dam of nine times winner on the flat Snowed Under. Polarity (Sam) by Group 1 winner Hamas, had a few educational runs on the flat trained by James Bethell and was placed fourth in a 12 furlong maiden. We've since given her plenty of time to strengthen up into her 17hh frame and she'll go into training over jumps this summer (she's already demonstrated that she can put her scope to good use by annoyingly jumping in and out of fields at home!). Celestial Bay (Sky) is by the exceptionally well bred Septieme Ciel who is a Group 1 winner by a Group 1

winner out of a Group 1 winner! Brian Fletcher has always been a big fan describing her as being "as nice a youngster as I've seen". Sky will also go into training this summer but with a view to running on the flat later in the year. We have high hopes for both - so please let us know - or visit the website at www.homebredracing.co.uk if you're interested in having a share.

Did you know?

Ballydoyle maestro Aidan O'Brien saddled no less than six runners in the 2008 Oaks - but still couldn't provide the winner, Look Here.

Who said jockeys have no brains?



"Ninety percent of riding horses is in your head. Physically, anybody can be taught to ride to a certain level. The hard part about riding is the racing brain. How fast we're going - where the best ground is - which is the right horse to be following - where the winning post is. There are tons of different calculations".
Ruby Walsh

Johnston sets sights on jumps racing



Mark Johnston claims improved levels of prize-money have lured him back to jumps racing. The Middleham handler has only saddled a clutch of National Hunt horses since the turn of the century although he won the Fighting Fifth Hurdle at Newcastle with Star Rage in 1997. But Johnston will return to the jumps circuit this season, for which he has three horses primed to compete over hurdles. He said: "When I last had runners over jumps the prize-money was so bad. "I remember sending horses to the races for next to no prize-money. I decided it was a bad job. "In recent years, prize-money has swung around and it is arguably better than on the flat, particularly when you compare it to the all-weather prize-money, which is just ridiculous. "We are better off running these horses over jumps so we are going to give it a go with three decent horses. "If this worked very well, we enjoyed it and the owners did, then we might have some more, but I'm not expecting to." Johnston's hurdling recruits are Becausewecan, Tartan Gunna and Boundless Magic.

New kids on the block

Now that the new 2012 flat season is upon us it's time to take a look at the stallions whose first progeny reach the racetrack this year and may produce 2-year-old winners. The most obvious candidates include Astronomer Royal who should produce speedy types, the classy Duke of Marmalade, Falco, Haatef, Mount Nelson, New Approach, Ramonti, Raven's Pass, Sakhee's Secret, Tamayuz and Thousand Words. Those most likely to produce sharper types are Group 1 winner New Approach, Haatef who was a high class sprinter, Falco who is half brother to the speedy Ivan Lips and Captain Marvelous who's by Invincible Spirit. Duke of Marmalade's yearlings fetched big prizes at the sales and he seems an obvious candidate. But with such big investments owners may not be in a rush to get their purchases on the track. Mount Nelson's



Duke of Marmalade has his first runners

crop also sold well, but his stock may prove to need more time. Similarly, New Approach's progeny may need some time.

Our suggested top 3 new stallions to look out for are: Captain Marvelous, Haatef and Falco.

Big Bucks

In 2008 the racing and breeding industry in Britain was responsible for almost 50,000 full-time employees while another 40,000 were employed in the betting industry. It has been estimated that 33 per cent of the jobs in Newmarket are directly related to horse racing and 66 per cent of bets placed in Britain are bet on horse racing.

Did you know?

Vincent O'Brien is the only trainer to have trained the winner of the Derby, the Cheltenham Gold Cup and the Grand National



Keiren Fallon

Whose title?

Richard Hughes' lengthy ban for alleged misdemeanours in India makes the champion jockey title for the 2012 flat season unusually open. In years gone by it was possible to predict as only 1 or 2 ever had a real chance - but this year is different. Ryan Moore is favourite to win but other challengers came to the fore last season including Silvester de Souza. But new retainers for new faces mean that contractual commitments may hinder de Souza and Paul Hanagan. Luke Morris has compiled a massive number of winners on the all-weather - as has Joe Fanning. But maybe the man they all have to beat is racing's 'bad boy' Keiren Fallon who's on record as saying he wants to be champion again.

That winning feeling...

Sir Gordon Richards is the most prolific jockey in the history of British racing. The 26-time Champion Jockey rode 4,870 winners from his 21,843 races during his career, which spanned three decades. However, he trails the world's leading jockeys by a considerable margin. On 9 January 2008, Jorge Ricardo (Brazil, aged 46) became the first jockey to ride 10,000 winners, while Russell Baze (USA, aged 50) claimed his 10,000th winner just 22 days later.

Science or instinct?

Linebreeding is built on the principle of "breeding like to like to get like." It affords the serious horse breeder the opportunity to set a type in the shortest amount of time. The greatest danger in a linebreeding is that it intensifies all of the genes - good and bad. In other words, if you have a line of inherently gifted racehorses, breeding like to like - speed to speed - should result in an ever-faster line of horses. If, at the same time, this line of horses is consistently bad-tempered, breeding like to like should result in an intensified line of poorly dispositioned horses. The only way to offset the intensification of undesirable traits in a linebreeding program is to not breed with those that have problems. Inbreeding is an intensified form of linebreeding, with the sole difference being in the genetic closeness of the horses being bred to each other. The advantages of inbreeding are that they afford the surest and quickest method of fixing and perpetuating a desirable characteristic or group of characteristics - it tends to create lines or strains of animals that are uniform in type and it keeps the closest possible relationship to a desirable ancestor.



Homebred mare Snowy Mantle with her foal Celestial Bay

The disadvantages of inbreeding are that they almost certainly increase the proportion of undesirable breeding stock, with faults often appearing with increased frequency. Whether you decide to breed on the principles of outcrossing or linebreeding, or a combination of the two, it is important to remember that, scientific discoveries

notwithstanding, horse breeding remains much more of an acquired craft than an applied science. Or, as US expert Hank Wiescamp repeatedly said "There is no secret, and there is no magic formula. It's knowing your horses, studying them every day and being honest with yourself when it comes time to make your breeding decisions".



Does racing have too many handicaps?

The theory of handicapping is that it gives every horse in the race an equal chance - so the bookies love them! Many think it's time for a rethink - including Middleham maestro Mark Johnston who admits he would like to "see the handicap system scrapped", which will outrage some - particularly the bookmakers. "When I started 20 years ago, you looked through a sales catalogue, if they didn't win in Britain, you didn't really count it as a winner. In certain ways we tended to look down upon Italian,

German and particularly if you saw something that won in Hong Kong or Macau. "We used to be the supplier of horses for places like Hong Kong. We are now no longer the suppliers - they don't want a British horse if they can have an Australian horse - because they think the Australian horse is better. That's a diabolical state. Handicappers in Britain are obsessed with what they call 'slippage' and they continually drop beaten horses (in the handicap) so that the whole handicap rating system will

drop That's why there's always this continual fight between trainers and handicappers. The trainers feel that their horses should have the opportunity to come down." Handicapping also actively encourages cheating - not allowing a horse to run on it's merits - to achieve an artificially lower mark. The BHA is apparently concerned that the overseas talent drain is due to a continuing decline in the number of races programmed to develop potential Group-class horses.

The BHA's head of communications, Paul Struthers, said: "This reduction in opportunities for decent horses rated in the high 80s and 90s is of particular concern." Anyone who has been to Tattersalls in Newmarket over the past few years will know that the steady trickle of decent horses going abroad has now become a torrent. Either that or they are going jumping for better prizes. Could the root of the problem be the handicap system itself?

Snapshot

As the Homebred Stud is a member of the RSPB Farmers' Alliance hedge cutting is a February task only every other year to help birdlife.



The luck of the Irish!

A punter walked into a Paddy Power betting shop in Bantry, County Cork, a few hours before the Aintree meeting and placed his £15 accumulator bet on Silver Birch priced at 33-1 for the Grand National, 16-1 Kings Key and 12-1 Al Eile also at the Aintree meeting. When his first three romped home to victory he nonchalantly walked back to the bookies to watch his fourth and final horse, Paymaster General, win at 10-1 at Lingfield. The luck of the Irish!