

You'll never beat the bookies!

When a bookmaker takes a bet, unless it is in error, they are obliged to pay you out. Many punters these days have a problem striking a bet in the first place. It is very difficult in some cases, especially on the internet, because the technology is such that any successful punter is flagged up instantly and their stakes are restricted.



Barney Curley still waiting...

Wolverhampton, leaving Grant's horse, Jeu De Roseau, making his first appearance for 742 days, to win at Towcester's evening meeting. But a year on, Betfred.com, who are based in Gibraltar, are refusing to pay out on bets that show a profit of more than £823,000 to Barney Curley's relatives. On June 1, Betfred.com's lawyers informed five account holders, four of them related to Curley, that their bets would be voided under the company's rule 10, which states: "Any person or group of persons acting in an attempt to defraud our client Betfred.com will have their bets voided". The decision followed days after the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority accused Curley of deception, the account holders of fraud and the BHA of misapplying its own rules,

despite the findings of the BHA and the Independent Betting Adjudication Service finding nothing wrong. Neal Wilkins, PR director at Apollo, a bookmaker who pride themselves on facilitating those who like striking a hefty bet, said: "I was working for Victor Chandler when the coup took place and they paid out immediately. There was simply no question of any fraudulent activity. "And there was ample opportunity to hedge the bets, as many firms did. "I'm very surprised that Betfred have decided to hide behind the GRA, especially at this time when they have just bought the Tote for £millions. It's absolutely disgraceful. "You'd have thought that they would have the money to pay and it would have been the end of this sad story. "They have simply been caught with their trousers down and they should have paid up with good grace long before now." The matter is still in the lawyers' hands and let's hope that Curley's friends and relatives get paid out in the end. It all goes to show just how difficult it is to beat the bookies - even if you win!



Can it be King Kauto?

Can Kauto make the famous 5?

After gaining revenge in record time at Haydock over his conqueror in the last Cheltenham Gold Cup, there can be little doubt that Kauto Star is the best chaser we're likely to see or have seen. Best Mate's domination of the chasing scene was almost certainly flattered by the lack of any opposition - and could even the great Arkle have won two Tingle Creeks over the minimum trip in such devastating style? A fifth win in the King George at Kempton on Boxing Day would surely seal the argument.

WINNING POST

THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER FROM HOMEBRED RACING

WINTER 2011/12

French racing takes to the sand...



Work is nearing completion on the new Polytrack course at Chantilly. It should be ready for use early in the new year, with its first fixture set for March 3, one of 36 meetings scheduled for the course during 2012, of which 14 will be solely run on the new all-weather surface. There are no current plans for further all-weather tracks as the completion of the Chantilly project will bring to six the number of French venues that can race on an artificial surface. The other five are Cagnes-sur-Mer, Marseille-Vivieux, Pau, Lyon La Soie, Pornichet La Baule and Deauville, meaning that there is a good geographical spread across the country.



Sheena Hill has done all the prep work with our 3-year-old Delagoa Bay

Ready for winter!

Delagoa Bay is now back in full training with Sylvester Kirk in Lambourn after a two month break turned out at home. Poppy then spent 6 weeks doing roadwork up and down the local lanes with Sheena. We're very pleased with her as she's filled out nicely and seems to have strengthened up too - so

fingers crossed for success on the track this winter. Poppy has shown plenty of promise and been placed without managing to get her head in front so far - but the yard is very hopeful that she can win soon on the polytrack this winter. 1 mile 3 furlongs looks to be her optimum trip.

Did you know?

Arkle was the shortest priced winner of the Cheltenham Gold Cup - in 1966 he won at 10/1 ON!

The National debate...

Aintree has announced that changes to the structure and groundwork of fences will be made, including reducing the drop on the landing side of Becher's Brook. The latest raft of proposals - 25 in all are as follows:

- Minimum age of horses to be increased to seven from six
- All horses to have previously finished fourth or better in a chase under rules of three miles or further
- Various elements of pre- and post-race procedures to be reviewed and enhanced, including arrangements at the pull-up area
- Bypassing of fences to continue, with customised equipment

- Improved processes for identifying and responding to weather-related risks
- More targeted suitability criteria for all the race's participants and increased membership for the existing Authority Panel which reviews the suitability of those horses entered in all races over the Grand National fences
- Existing raceday veterinary inspections (carried out by Authority Veterinarians) of all horses running in the National to be extended to all races run over the Grand National fences.

In other tweaks, jockeys will have to be slightly better qualified. Previously they had

to have ridden 15 winners over obstacles but in future ten of those will have to have been over fences, rather than hurdles. If they fall shy of the requisite number they will no longer be able to apply to the BHA for dispensation. Jamie Stier, BHA Director of Raceday Operations and Regulations said: "As part of the review a wide range of proposals was considered and in many cases a need for change was not found. "Topics included discussions about the maximum number of runners in the race, the position of the start and run to the first fence. We'll continue to make changes whenever needed to reduce casualties".



Brian Fletcher with Polarity

Aintree legend Brian Fletcher gives his views... Brian is the Grand National's most successful jockey of all time. Brian says about the changes "I'm all for anything that makes it safer for horses and riders. The race certainly isn't the test it used to be - but no one wants to see injuries. The fences took some jumping in my day, but I was always able to get round - and winning the race three times was very, very special."



The regulation whip

The cushioned whip was introduced over jumps in 2004 and on the Flat in 2007. Its energy-absorbing design helps prevent discomfort and injury to horses, replacing a whip which was less flexible and not cushioned over the length of the contact area. The BHA is now working with racing authorities in the US and Hong Kong to harmonise whip specifications around the world.

Racing chooses its winners



Sir Henry Cecil

Sir Henry Cecil and Donald McCain have been crowned champion trainers of their respective trades at the 2011 Horserace Writers' and Photographers' Association Derby Awards glittering annual ceremony in London.

Cecil, who only recently received his knighthood from the Queen, masterminded the season of the unbeaten Frankel, with his five victories including the 2000 Guineas and Group 1 Sussex Stakes. Frankel's owner Khalid Abdullah was also among the winners with other big-race verdicts for the likes of Twice Over and Midday securing him the Owner of the Year. Cecil said: "Good horses make good trainers." Teddy Grimthorpe, who is Abdullah's racing manager, said of Frankel's possible 2012 campaign:

"The plan is to start off at Newbury in the Lockinge, possibly, then Royal Ascot, the Eclipse and the Juddmonte." "It's been unbelievable. The horse, Henry and the team, it's been a joy". McCain followed in the footsteps of his father, the legendary Ginger McCain who died recently, when winning the Grand National with Ballabriggs back in April. He also houses the current ante-post favourite for the Arkle in the shape of last season's Champion Hurdle runner-up Peddlers Cross.

Living the dream!

A number of aspects of Danedream's demolition of a top class Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe field beggar belief, not least her winning time of 2m 24.49s which trimmed a tenth of a second off Peintre Celebre's course record. She now must be the bargain of the century. Already fit and ready to race when she fetched just €9,000 at the BBAG breeze-up in Baden-Baden on June 4 last year, she had won back two-thirds of

her purchase price within 16 days of that sale by scoring on her debut at the little-known French provincial course of Wissembourg. Within another five weeks she had gained black type for finishing third in a Cologne Listed contest. Other bargain basement buys to make it to the top recently as Group 1 winners include Dream Ahead (\$11,000) and Tangerine Trees (unsold at £8,000). The dream lives on!



Danedream - a brilliant winner of l'Arc de Triomphe

Did you know?

Rubstic, ridden by Maurice Barnes, was the first ever Scottish trained winner of the Scottish Grand National in 1979.

Snapshot

The unusually warm autumn has provided plenty of grass and sun for broodmares at home.



Lester Piggott - nearsie wins the Breeders Cup

Upholding the family tradition!



Cirrus des Aigles wins top honours

The wonderful victory of Cirrus des Aigles in Britain's most valuable race ever - the Champion Stakes - has been a big boost to the expectations for our unraced filly Celestial Bay. Cirrus des Aigles, the world's top rated horse over the distance, is out of a mare by Septieme Ciel - also sire of Celestial Bay. It's no surprise that Septieme Ciel is proving to be a great sire of fillies - he was a Group 1 winner himself out of a mare who also won at the top level. He sired group winners in USA before moving to France where he was the leading sire of 2 year olds and now stands at the Dairy House Stud in Wiltshire. Our filly Celestial Bay has an uncanny resemblance to her dad having a white muzzle and two white socks behind. No pressure then!

Did you know?

Starting stalls were used for the first Epsom Derby in 1967 - won by Royal Palace.



Battle Group - one to follow this season

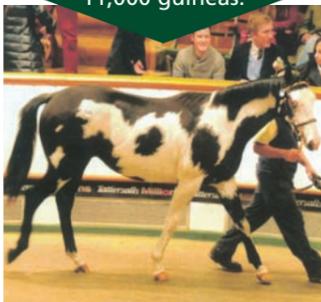
David Pipe's stable stars to follow in 2012

"I'm looking forward to Bobby Ewing. We bought him at the sales with a leg injury - but he beat Menorah at Doncaster and has a lot of potential. He's a two-miler and will either stay hurdling or go novice chasing. Battle Group will go novice chasing. He's a tough horse related to Upgrade, that Dad used to train, and is very similar, very quirky. Notus De La Tour will go novice chasing too and I think he'll be a very neat and quick jumper of fences. Barney Cool is a nice bumper horse who won at Fontwell at the end of last season. He's bred by his owners, Nick and Sue Mills

and is related to Mr Cool and Miss Cool. This fellow could be the best of them".

Snapshot

This piebald colt caused something of a sensation at Newmarket Tattersalls Sales - and was sold for 11,000 guineas.



Did we pick the right stallions?

In our early season newsletter we highlighted some of the new stallions we thought would produce winners when their first progeny reached the track. We gave mentions to Dutch Art (second in the list), Dark Angel (3rd), Amadeus Wolf (4th) and Excellent Art (5th). Not doing so well were Strategic Prince in seventh place, Dylan Thomas - surprisingly only ninth - Baltic King and Vital Equine - fourteenth and twentieth respectively. However our 'nap' selection to sire the most winners was Red Clubs - and happily he delivered the goods finishing top of the table!



Red Clubs - tops the first season list

Did you know?

Legendary jockey Sir Gordon Richards was a Shropshire lad. The pub in his home village of Donnington is named The Champion Jockey - in his honour.

The comeback granddad!

Comebacks are two a penny in sport, but rarely do they give rise to the most satisfying win of a person's career, as was the case for Lester Piggott. The 54-year-old grandfather was less than two weeks into his return when lining up on Royal Academy in the 1990 Breeders' Cup Mile at Belmont Park (discounting an appearance in South America earlier in the year). Piggott, who had not race-ridden for five years, during which time he served 12 months of a three-year sentence for tax evasion and

also had a bash at training, partnered Royal Academy for the equally legendary Vincent O'Brien, who had been instrumental in talking him into renewing his riding career. The three-year-old was trying a mile for only the second time and was chasing a first win over the trip. That was in stark contrast to British raider Markofdistinction, arguably Europe's top miler and who came into the race having scored three times over the distance, including the Queen Anne and Queen Elizabeth II Stakes.

After breaking last of the 13 runners, Piggott did not rush his partner into the contest but made ground steadily from the rear, stepping up a gear at halfway so that he was about sixth turning in. There were still three rivals to pass at the furlong pole, but Piggott was in rat-a-tat overdrive on Royal Academy and forced him past Itsallgreetkome and Corey Nakatani in the dying strides, for what he later called "the most satisfying winner I ever rode".

Whipping up controversy

The handling of the new whip regulations has made British racing look pretty silly and incompetent. Whether regulations can anyway be successfully rolled out by a single authority in what is an international sport is also questionable - our jockeys often ride in several different countries within a matter of a few days - or just a weekend. Making further immediate changes meant more confusion and that no one really knows now what the rules finally are! It can also fairly be claimed that the new

rules actually legitimize use of the whip by prescribing the number of blows allowed - which is presumably contrary to the intention of having the new rules in the first place! There's no doubt that to control and steer half a ton of horse, jockeys need to carry whips. A simpler (and better?) rule might be to only allow the use of the whip for correction (keeping straight etc) and not for coercion. So anything other than correction would be deemed 'incorrect use'. The consistent application of this rule would



New rules have caused chaos!

best be applied by the appointment of professional stewards ...but don't get me started on that argument!