

Who needs friends?

Horses are herd animals and often fret if alone - our own Keep A Welcome was an orphan foal and grew up with his pal Rambo the ram.



Keep A Welcome and Rambo the ram

Keep A Welcome was orphaned when just a few days old but he and Rambo the ram (shown here) became firm friends with the ram becoming a great obstacle to practice jumping over! The ram lamb was given to us by our neighbour Ieuan Evans suggesting that he'd be good company for our foal - and so it proved - ultimately Rambo decided that he was definitely a horse rather than a sheep and shunned any attention from any other woolly look-alikes. Here are a few others:

Strong Impact and Charlie the pig

It can take a while to find your perfect partner and after sniffing around in several other stalls, Charlie found the right place alongside Strong Impact. Charlie would spend his days tucked up in the corner of Strong Impact's stall. When he was not in there, Strong Impact would do all he could to herd his pink pal back in alongside him.

"The horse worries when Charlie isn't in the stall," Andres Garcia, barn watchman at Belmont for trainer Bruce Brown, told the New York Times.



Strong Impact with his loyal stall companion, Charlie the pig

Remittance Man and Nobby the sheep

Remittance Man was highly talented, but also highly

strung. He would constantly walk his box until trainer Nicky Henderson introduced him to Nobby. Remittance Man became obsessed with Nobby, so much so that when the sheep was returned to his flock and replaced, Remittance Man picked up the intruder and threw him out of the stable. After much effort, Nobby was found among the flock of 400 and returned to his soulmate, much to the relief of all.



Remittance Man: 1992 Champion Chase winner was a worrier

Don't Push It and a flock of sheep

It started with one sheep for Don't Push It and quickly escalated to half a dozen. Don't Push It was not fond of other horses and was relocated to a stable near the bottom of trainer Jonjo O'Neill's gallop. The move failed to spark much life into the future Grand National winner, who showed little interest in his food, until he was joined by a sheep. Don't Push It's affection for sheep grew so much that more were introduced to keep him company and he never looked back.



Don't Push It: at peace with a flock of sheep Edward Whitaker (racingpost.com/photos)

American Pharoah and Smokey the pony

American Pharoah was a mighty racehorse, winning the US Triple Crown and the Breeders' Cup Classic in 2015. With him every step of the way was Smokey, a buckskin gelding who would calm and offer reassurance to his nervous and flighty friend. "Smokey's my favourite horse in the barn," said trainer Bob Baffert. "It's sort of cool to see him out there before the races start. We rub his forehead for luck."



Royal Windsor racecourse

Racecourses slipping up

The early season dry spell has proved difficult for racecourses with hard ground forcing the abandonment of jumping cards. More of a concern is the inability of tracks to provide safe ground for flat racing. This is usually a problem when rain eventually falls onto previously fast ground making the surface dangerously slick. Windsor was forced to abandon racing when horses were slipping in early races. Windsor announced: "ARC and the team at Royal Windsor would like to apologise to everyone who was inconvenienced by

the events. In order to ensure the safety of all participants extra work will take place on the bends". Disappointingly the scenario of slippery bends is well known and previously been the cause of many incidents - so it surely cannot be beyond the skills of professional groundsmen to anticipate the problem. Leicester, Warwick and Yarmouth have all abandoned meetings due to the ground becoming unsafe during racing. All racecourses extoll the virtues of safety being a priority for horses and jockeys - time to start living up to their promises!

The Derby - the stuff of legends

Probably no race has spawned so many, almost unbelievable stories, than The Epsom Derby in its 237-year history. One of the most amazing was that of 1844 when Running Rein had already established his authority by muscling his way to the front as the runners rounded Tattenham Corner. Running Rein won easily - but all bets were suspended as one of racing's greatest scandals was revealed - he was an older horse substituted for a 3-year-old! The plot was hatched in 1841 with the purchase of a yearling colt by chief conspirator Abraham Levi Goodman. But it wasn't simply a case of entering the

horse and arriving for Derby Day. The fraudsters also needed a younger horse to credibly pose as the older Running Rein. Concerns grew after a 2-y-o maiden race at Newmarket in which the younger horse posed as Running Rein. The ease of the horse's Derby win meant that suspicions soon turned to anger when Running Rein was revealed as a 4-year-old and the second placed Orlando was declared the winner. Abraham Goodman disappeared and was never apprehended and his co-conspirators were never brought to justice due to lack of evidence and any reliable witnesses. Could it ever happen again?

WINNING POST

THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER FROM HOMEBRED RACING

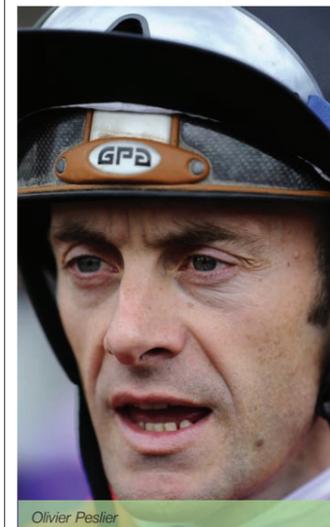
AUTUMN 2017

Sylvester with Time To Perfection en route to the gallops



Our stable visit to Cedar Lodge was on the balmy August Bank holiday weekend when Time To Perfection did her first piece of work since her injury. Miss P worked between a couple of other two-year-olds and, although Sylvester was anxious that this might be something of a test, she picked up easily with the others to still be alongside at the end of the gallops. She worked really well and it was particularly pleasing to see how well she moved and has grown. If all goes well, her first run should now be no more than a few weeks away - probably over 1 mile at Newbury or Salisbury. Watch this space!

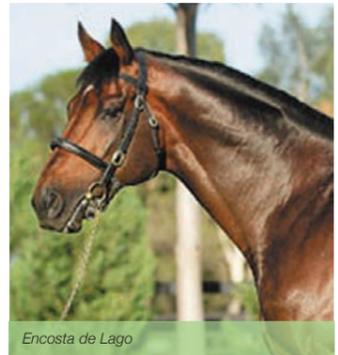
A ride to forget!



Olivier Peslier

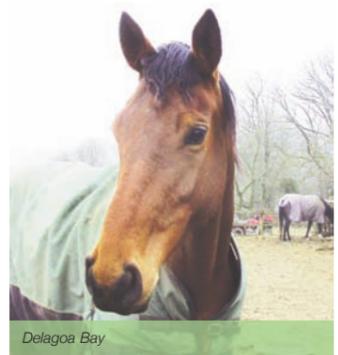
Top French jockey Olivier Peslier had a longer journey home than planned when torrential rain at Glorious Goodwood grounded his plane. His immediate thought was to grab a taxi and make a dash to Portsmouth. But rushed plans went from bad to worse - having dashed onto the quayside to catch the soon to depart ferry, Olivier was surprised at the speed of the crossing - and even more that his compatriots were now all speaking English! In his haste he had taken the ferry to the Isle of Wight - rather than cross-channel to his homeland. Definitely a forgettable Ryde!

Encosta de Lago is new broodmare supremo



Encosta de Lago

Encosta de Lago, sire of our own Delagoa Bay, has set a new record as a broodmare sire toppling legendary Danehill from the top spot. Encosta de Lago first reached top of the table in Australia after the 2016 season and now boasts a record of 268 winners from 673 runners earning over 17.6 million dollars. His top performers include Impending who won the prestigious Group 1 Stradbroke Handicap as well as four other Group 1's. It all goes to make Delagoa Bay even more special and more exciting to see her first foal!



Delagoa Bay

Did you know?

If you bet £1 on every Homebred winner in the past 5 seasons you would have won £51.73.



Lucinda Russell trained this year's Grand National winner

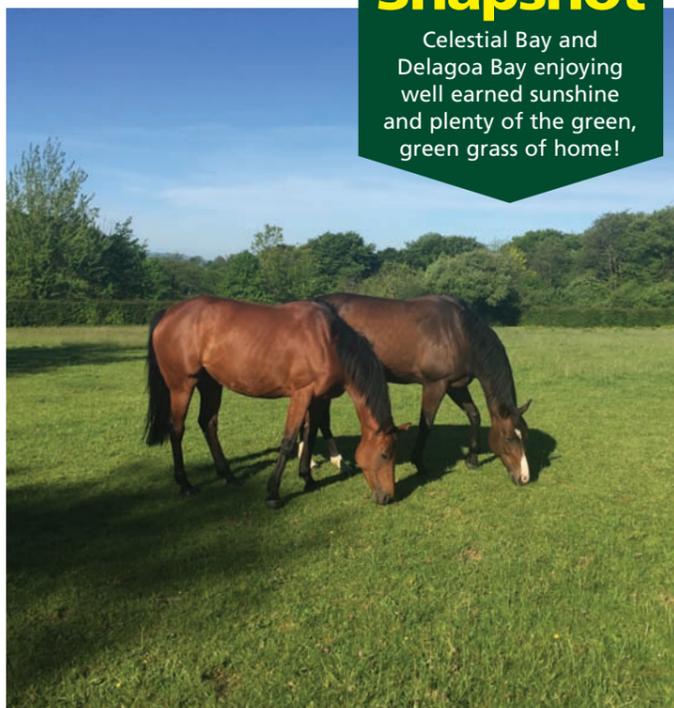
Bucking the trend!

The recent success of Josephine Gordon on the flat, Lizzie Kelly over jumps and Lucinda Russell, saddling this year's Grand National winner, contradict a recent survey suggesting that women are under-represented in racing. The BBC reports that a survey of over 400 people involved at all levels in racing reveals that many areas remain male dominated and opportunities are being denied because of the persistence of an 'old boys' network which fails to take the role of women seriously. The facts are that many more women than men are entering racing by a ratio of 70:30 but the report identifies 'career stagnation' once women try to make progress. Some had reported being made to feel

unwelcome when applying for more senior roles. Susannah Gill, a director of ARC Racing said "If you look at who is on the senior boards of organisations in racing, the average is that only 16% are women". Clearly gender should be no barrier to anyone in any sphere and female jockeys are proving that they can compete at the highest level - after all, an all female team won the 2015 Shergar Cup against all male opponents. But meanwhile, whilst racing juggles with the notion of a level playing field for all, the French racing authorities have introduced a 2kg allowance for female riders competing against their male counterparts. What a dilemma!

Snapshot

Celestial Bay and Delagoa Bay enjoying well earned sunshine and plenty of the green, green grass of home!



A second bite at the cherry?

Almost unbelievably, racing conspired to shoot itself in the foot by spurning the opportunity to buy the Tote and allowed it to be sold to BetFred. However, BetFred's licence to operate racing's pool betting will expire in 2018. This is a real opportunity for racing to regain valuable income from pool betting by racecourses banding together to create their own Tote. Hopes for this ideal outcome have been somewhat dented by Ascot, Bangor and Chester racecourses deciding to go it alone. The real value will be to combine revenues from off and on-course betting online. But the concern must be that the bookmaking industry will wish to continue to monopolise all forms of betting - especially as their revenues from high street shops continue to diminish.

Celebrating 100 years...

The Thoroughbred Breeder's Association is celebrating its centenary year, having been founded in 1917. The world has changed considerably since the association's establishment in 1917 - when Britain was in the midst of the First World War. A great deal has happened in the last 100 years, and recording key events in the Association's history has been important in understanding the TBA's role and position today. The TBA's history, the pedigrees and successes are so important to the heritage of British racing, and it is equally important that the TBA works to preserve and record this for the future.

Off to a flying start?



The breeding industry is obsessed with early foals - but nature takes its own course. Just as in gardening, late plantings inevitably catch up, and late foals can still blossom on the racecourse. That's proven by the roll of honour representing racing's very best - from Northern Dancer (born May 27th) and Dancing Brave (May 11th) to Secretariat (30th March) and Saddlers Wells (April 11th)... and there are many more equine superstars born in late spring. True to say that many of these have been middle distance horses and that breeders, so obsessed with speed, look for early foals. Homebred Racing's own mares Delagoa Bay and Celestial Bay are due to foal in early March - which is quite early enough. What advantage is there to have a January foal that can't enjoy turnout in a grassy paddock but has to cope with snow, rain, frost and mud? Experts such as Luke Lillington of Mount Castle Stud says, "The foaling season used by breeders is not the rule intended by nature. Grazing and weather is so much better later in the spring and yet people have to turn horses out into a sea of mud in what's mid-winter. We have a mare, Best Terms, a May 19th foal who won as a juvenile at Royal Ascot".

Did you know?

The average cost of having a horse in training for a season is £22,631.00

Racing at Alexandra Palace



The finishing post

Racecourses that once attracted racegoers in tens of thousands have long disappeared beneath roads, buildings and even airport runways. Is Kempton Park to be the next? Those closest to city conurbations have always been the first to go - Banford Bridge in Birmingham closed in 1965. Alexandria Park, just 7 miles from the centre of London, closed in 1970. Castle Irwell in Salford last raced in 1963 and Hurst Park in Surrey held its last meeting on 10th October 1962. Gatwick which hosted the WW1 runnings of the Grand National, closed in 1948 - the only reminder of it being the Flying Horse pub in the airport's south terminal. All suffered from apparent better use for space close to city centres. But provincial tracks have disappeared too including Aldershot, Atherstone, Blackpool,

Bournemouth, Cardiff, Chesterfield, Derby, Durham, Folkestone, Hull, Ipswich, Lanark, Lewes, Lincoln, Northampton, Plymouth, Rugby, Tenby, Wrexham and Wye. There are even more - well over 200 more, which rather puts to bed the argument that the current calendar offers too many meetings!



Manchester's racecourse at Castle Irwell - look at the huge crowd!

What's in a name?

It's always fun to scan the racecard to see which are the best names. Inevitably there are some very silly ones like Hoof Hearted and others like HaHaHa just to make a commentators nightmare. Famously Wear The Fox Hat was prevented from running when appearing on the racecard for Folkestone - one that clearly slipped through Wetherbys vetting procedure. (How many others we wonder with so many unpronounceable Arabic names?) Calling a horse In Front also clearly gives a commentator problems.

The Queen is a great advocate for creating a name from the sire and the dam - a good example being her current horse Maths Prize (Royal Applause ex Hypoteneuse). Naming horses this way creates obvious issues - how an earth will we get names for Due Diligence ex Celestial Bay or Swiss Spirit ex Delagoa Bay? (Answers on a postcard please!) For me the cleverest remains Vindaloo, who chalked up an amazing 45 career wins... his sire was Indian Ridge and the dam Lovely Lagoon. Top that!

Welsh Assembly 1996 - 2017



Sad to report that Welsh Assembly (his stable name was Sani - Welsh for Socks) has died. He was memorably a two-year-old winner when ridden by Kieren Fallon in a 3-way-photofinish over 6 furlongs which was rated by the Racing Post as 'The ride of the season'.

Sani retired to stay with trainer Gerry Enright and to compete in dressage ridden by Gerry's wife Midge. Recently Sani was diagnosed with a heart condition which deteriorated making it sadly necessary for him to be put to sleep.

Did you know?

The 2017 Derby was the richest ever with over £1.5 million in prizemoney on offer

Blooming hilarious!



There's always great admiration for anyone that can tell a joke against themselves - and share a laugh. At Cedar Lodge, Sylvester and Fanny's home overlooks a small paddock where the horses enjoy a pick of grass after work. Sylvester had noticed a flush of dandelions had turned the usually lush green to a blaze of yellow - so instructed one of the stable lads to use a strimmer to rid the paddock of its yellow invaders. Early the following morning Sylvester looked out of the bedroom window to see that the area was once again wonderfully green. "What a great job that lad's done!" he exclaimed... not realising that actually no strimming had been done at all - the dandelion heads had just closed in the cool of the night!



The brilliantly named Vindaloo went on to represent Britain at international horseball