

## Did we pick the winners?

It's about now that the pecking order for the first season stallions begins to take shape - so how did our predictions do? Well - probably okay as leader No Nay Never was on our shortlist but second placed Bungle in the Jungle never featured on our radar! But we did give a good mention to Kingman, currently third and sure to improve as the season continues, as well as Charm Spirit, Slade Power, War Command and Heerat who all continue to do really well and are close on the heels of the leaders.



No Nay Never - was on our shortlist

A valuable statistic to look for is the ratio of winners to runners and War Command is second only to leader No Nay Never in 36% of his runners being winners.



## Weaning is a stressful time

Autumn is the time when we need to separate the foals from their dams - which is stressful for all involved - including us! The foals are led into their boxes to be separated from the mares who are turned out into a bare field to help dry up their milk after suckling the foals for the past 6 months. Ideally this needs to be far away from the stables to be out of sight and earshot to prevent incessant calling to and from mares and foals. The foals will have the company of each other and hopefully parent and suckling will soon become a distant memory. They're kept in for a week until settled and then turned out during the day and back in at nights if the weather is rough. They've already been on hard feed from a month old and so hopefully lose no condition once weaned and are able to enjoy each other's company tearing around the paddocks. The next challenge will be springtime when colts need to be separated from fillies...

## BHA warns of threat to Grand National



BHA's Ross Hamilton

Ross Hamilton, spokesman for the BHA, has joined the siren voices warning that Brexit will have unforeseen and serious consequences. He suggests that Brexit is a threat to the Grand National if runners from overseas are unable to compete. But this just seems alarmist ignoring that runners regularly traverse the world to compete at many different venues none of which are located in or have any connection with the European Union. Horses from the UK regularly race in countries outside the EU just as runners from outside the EU compete in the UK. So it would seem that regulation and procedures are already well proven for international racing to continue, Brexit or no Brexit!

## Did you know?

The record for riding the most wins in a season is still held by Gordon Richards who partnered an amazing 269 winners in 1947.



Backpacker scoring a 100th winner for champion jockey Richard Dunwoody

## Future of Towcester in doubt

The future of one of Britain's most attractive jumps course is in doubt after going into administration and remaining fixtures are currently being transferred to Southwell. This is hardly like for like as Southwell is flat as a pancake whilst Towcester is recognised as probably the country's stiffest test with a very steep climb over the last half mile. Set in Lord Hesketh's lovely picturesque and manicured Northamptonshire estate, Towcester removed itself from

mainstream racing when deciding to go it alone and not charge for admission. It was a plan that resulted in huge crowds but seemingly insufficient income from racegoers. It would be a sad loss as the course offers unparalleled viewing of every inch of the course. Homebred Racing has fond memories of the track where our chaser Backpacker gave champion jockey Richard Dunwoody a memorable 100th winner on a Bank Holiday Monday.

## Girl Power...



This year's Shergar Cup, in which female jockeys triumphed over their male counterparts and the individual winning rider was Hayley Turner, clearly demonstrated that women riders need no weight allowance. The whole issue had been brought to the fore by the decision of the French

authorities to introduce a significant weight allowance for females riding against males - now reduced to 1.5kg. Hayley Turner says: "The Shergar Cup underlines that we don't need any weight allowance. The allowance in France certainly increased the number of girls riding, but here we're more than happy to compete on level terms".

# WINNING POST

THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER FROM HOMEBRED RACING

AUTUMN 2018



## Our new recruit!

This is Homebred Racing's new recruit - a lovely yearling filly by Canford Cliffs out of a dual winner over 7 furlongs for John Gosden. We hope she'll prove to be an early type as there's plenty of speed in her

family (her grand dam won over 5 furlongs) and we look forward to her making her racecourse debut in the spring. She's already stabled at Cedar Lodge and Sylvester says he likes her a lot... his stable's

superstar Salouen is also by Canford Cliffs who was a dual winner as a two-year-old and won five Group 1 races over a mile. We're now looking to name her - so any suggestions very welcome!

## 2019's most likely lads?

With the autumn yearling sales season now upon us buyers are looking to see which are the stallions that'll make the grade when their first youngsters reach the track in 2019. Of course, we're very hopeful that Due Diligence, sire of Celestial Bay's lovely colt will be to the fore - just as other sons of War Front in showing great early promise. But it's going to be a particularly competitive season with some of the big guns also having their first runners. These freshmen include the home grown Golden Horn and Night of Thunder as well as the great American Pharoah from the other side of the pond - all of whose youngsters may take time to show their potential. But Brazen Beau, Cable Bay, Hot Streak and Ivawood (only in alphabetical order) all look sure to produce



Brazen Beau - a likely type

earlier starters although there's always a surprise package lurking in the ranks of the lower priced stallions. Fountain of Youth and Music Master look the likely candidates in this category, both standing at less than £5000. Celestial Bay's family does not include any juvenile winners but it was only a minor setback that prevented her earlier debut.

Due Diligence was a spectacular wide-margin winner as a two-year-old and looks more than likely to also produce early types - so plenty to look forward to! But our top three to look out for in 2019 are Cable Bay, Brazen Beau - and of course - Due Diligence! Fountain of Youth looks to be one from the bargain basement.

## Did you know?

Ryan Moore's first winner was actually over jumps at Towcester riding for his dad Gary.

## George Baker takes on new role...

Leading jockey George Baker, forced to retire after a serious injury, is to take up the role as agent for Godolphin's top riders James Doyle and William Buick. George who rode Celestial Bay for us, and so memorably said on dismounting after her debut run 'Does the trainer know how fast this is?!', will take up duties at the end of this flat season. Doyle and Buick have both enjoyed stellar seasons and look sure to secure more top honours next year too.



Classic winning jockey won on Celestial Bay

George, who can list the St Leger amongst his 1,300 winners, says he's very much looking forward to his new job - but hopes to continue to contribute some punditry as he's been doing for ITV.



Pitstop and her new pal Luna

# Hughsie on his soapbox - again!

It's great that someone as outspoken and so very knowledgeable as ex-champion jockey Richard Hughes is providing a platform to express his views in his regular Saturday feature in the Racing Post. He's already pointed out some of the ludicrous new rules drafted in by the BHA and greatly improved the lot of owners at some courses by highlighting the total inadequacies of their catering. Richard's latest rant echoes our own sentiments that there are anyway far too many handicap races, but more importantly, how unfair it is for runners other



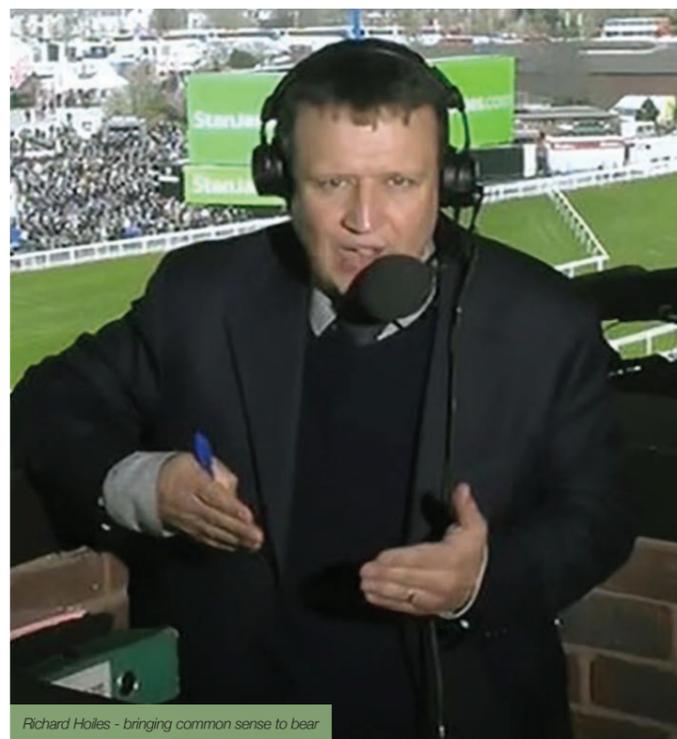
Celestial Bay wins ridden by Richard Hughes

than the winner to be burdened with more weight for just running well. Even more frustrating is for horses, like our own Celestial Bay, to receive additional weight when not even competing and whilst quietly standing in their box. Yep - let's have a bit more common sense... so keep your campaign rolling Hughsie!

## Did you know?

A yearling colt by War Front was this year's top lot at the USA's Keeneland Sales fetching \$2,400,000 - bought by Coolmore.

## A contrary view on handicapping



Richard Hoiles - bringing common sense to bear

Following Richard Hughes' rant about handicapping, the excellent commentator Richard Hoiles has also expressed his views: "The bedrock of any universal ratings system is maintaining an accurate

assessment of ability of each horse relative to each other. If two horses pull well clear of the rest then if the runner-up was granted an amnesty very few would want to line up in opposition next time".

Richard argues that this would soon lead to shorter priced favourites and smaller fields. He suggests that the biggest advance would be to directly tackle the issue which prompted Hughes' frustration, the fact that handicapping can be a cheat's charter as the true merit of a horse's ability is disguised by running unfit or being campaigned under conditions far away from optimum in terms of trip or ground. Richard plans that no handicap mark should be allotted to a horse, irrespective of the number of runs, until the handicapper is completely satisfied about its ability and that horses stepping up or down very markedly in trip after their qualifying runs would be prevented from running. More common sense! But we'd like to see fewer handicaps anyway in preference for banded races where horses compete at level weights with winners automatically stepped up to compete in a higher grade next time.

## Snapshot

Storm Callum left a trail of destruction with many trees down and branches caught up in the canopy only reached with some difficulty!



## Waving the flag for homebreds

The Thoroughbred Breeders Association has just published its review of the British breeding industry in the form of an economic impact report. It details the importance of thoroughbred breeding to the UK economy citing that it contributed £427 million in 2017 and directly supported over 19,000 jobs with a further 15,500 jobs supported via supply chain spending. Other key numbers reveal that there are 3,318 breeders (down 8% over last 5 years), 9,000 active broodmares and 4,778 foals born in 2017. Most alarming is the statistic that breeders lost an average of £23,500 on each lot sold at Tattersalls Book 3 sale and 66% of all breeders were unprofitable in 2017. Not all findings are gloomy - a quarter of the world's top races are in Great Britain where we have the highest proportion of world class horses relative to the number of foals, suggesting that we continue to have the best bloodlines. Racing contributes £3.5 billion to the UK economy and in terms of spectators racing is second only to football. The purpose behind the report is to garner support to ensure better rewards for British bred horses and so support the breeding industry that's clearly struggling.



Due Diligence

## Eagerly awaiting first juveniles

We're more than delighted with Celestial Bay's colt by 2019's first season stallion Due Diligence and we're looking forward to seeing how his yearlings perform at this year's sales and on the racetrack next year. His US based sire War Front continues to produce winners at the highest level and his sons have also enjoyed a great start to their own stallion careers - Declaration of War heading the table for second season stars across the pond and War Command has made a great start in this, his first season. Our hope is that Due Diligence will continue the trend. Our colt 'Rocky' looks very much like his dad - a very dark bay, almost black, with no markings other than a small white star.

# A step in the right direction

After wide consultation with racing, the BHA has at last grasped the nettle to bring in more professional stewarding. The current situation has been crazy allowing individual racecourses to appoint their own stewards, many of whom have never had any hands on experience of racing. The result has been inconsistency across a whole range of issues, decisions and punishments. But more importantly, if the BHA is to really clamp down on skulduggery to protect racing's reputation, it requires full time, independent and professional stewards to continue to oversee horses, riders and trainers under suspicion when they re-appear at other venues. Wolverhampton is a case in point where quite extraordinary and unnecessary enquiries have regularly been held - including into the running and riding of our own Homebred Star who was involved in a three-way photo finish. The stewards held an enquiry under the 'non-triers' rule despite the fact he was beaten by the narrowest of margins.



Homebred Star - 100/1 winner at Lingfield - less lucky at Wolverhampton!

He was ridden by then apprentice, now trainer, Robyn Brisland and all of us were asked to remain until after racing despite having competed in one of the early races on the card. It took hours for the stewards to conclude that all was well whilst any idiot would have considered that if the horse was being 'stopped' it clearly hadn't been

a very good job! Our trainer Sylvester Kirk successfully had a silly decision by the same stewards overturned after his runner was disqualified for interference. Although stewards will now be more professional, courses will still be allowed to nominate one member of the panel - but at least the change is a step in the right direction.



Conditions in New South Wales

## Australian breeders feeling the heat

The continuing drought is forcing Australian breeders to move stock in order to provide adequate grazing for mares and foals. Even large operations like Darley are struggling and the New South Wales racing authorities have allocated \$1 million to help stud farms. Coolmore is auctioning nominations in some of its leading stallions to raise funds to help other breeders.

It's reported that there's no hay available in Queensland and little to be found in NSW where small bales of hay are already fetching \$17 each and prices are rocketing. Although some parts of the south-east received a little welcome rain recently, areas of Queensland have received no rain for 4 years and there's serious concern about the welfare of horses on smaller farms.

## The weather put us to the test!

Arrival of Homebred Racing's latest two foals coincided with the Beast from the East with gales, blizzards and freezing cold... only to be followed by unseasonably warm and dry weather that just went on and on! Between the arrival of the foals on March 16th we had only two wet days until early August. It did mean no concern about baling the haylage before it rained but this year's crop was significantly smaller than normal and after cutting the fields were scorched and no grass grew back. In the very hot weather mares and foals were stabled during the day meaning we were feeding haylage for week after week when normally they'd be grazing the green, green grass of Wales.



Our neighbour ploughed his adjacent fields to re-sow in June but by mid-August there was no grass but just a carpet of mushrooms after the first very welcome rain. Now we've had some decent rain it'll probably never stop - but with the ground so warm after the scorching summer we've enjoyed a great flush of autumn grass.