



Harness Racing Calendar

The official publication of the British Harness Racing Club

Volume 51 No. 3



British Harness Racing Club

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Well, here we are with the latest edition of the Calendar and the season is well into its stride courtesy of a great deal of effort from the four hard tracks, and of course the good people of harness racing.

Of course, those attending meetings have been subject to adhering to the COVID-19 protocols, it hasn't been plain sailing but most people have been very understanding.

We still remain hopeful of opening up the tracks to more fans before the end of the season and my ambition is for us to see racing continuing well into the autumn. We have seen the introduction of live streaming enabling those unable to attend to enjoy some fine sport from home, and yes there were teething problems but due to the commitment of York and Tir Prince we have seen the delivery of a very professional service.

Another of our main aims remains the coverage and bookmaker support of our sport off course. This has been a long drawn out process with just a few meetings covered, but behind the scenes work continues in the hope a regular

service commences soon.

On the track we have seen some wonderful racing with both competitive races and quality performances being the order of the day.

There was a classy night's racing at Tir Prince on Derby Night with Ima Happy Fella taking the historic classic for owner and breeder Geoff Robson.

Geoff epitomises everything good about our sport, an enthusiast who reared his young colt from day one with the dream of hitting the big time, this wasn't about money, this was about satisfaction and pride, about dreams turning into reality as an emotional Robson lifted the historic Manchester Trotting Cup.

Continuing with the upbeat theme, the ex British and Irish trained pacers racing in North America are still winning races, advertising breeding operations on this side of the Atlantic.

As the governing body of racing in Great Britain it gives us great pleasure to be invited by the French governing body to work on a presentation for French students, along with STAGBI and Trot Britain, on the sport in this country

and our role as the BHRC.

There are still issues we need to address, one is the highly sensitive global issue of the whip, we at the BHRC take welfare seriously and will examine this extremely hot topic carefully.

Looking at general BHRC business, we as a company may be on the verge of surrendering our lease of the BHRC Office in Goole. Many of us feel it is a sound business move, saving money on the cost of operating such an establishment, a building we used for just 12 hours per week prior to lockdown. The office now is in West Wales operated by our wonderful secretary Heulwen Bulman.

One of the big talking points in recent years has been the issue of one person one vote, it is my intention to propose this resolution, along with a revamp of the electoral system in the coming weeks and as we head into autumn we will arrange the AGM for a date in November.

Shortly we will also attempt to form a Handicap Committee to examine handicap systems and to advise on the conditions of stakes races. On the subject of handicapping I would like to offer my personal gratitude to

Dai John Edwards for his valuable assistance in this sphere.

It does seem premature to be speaking about the 2020 Awards, at this stage it looks highly unlikely there will be a ceremony this year to honour our champions, in fact the awards for last season have yet to be presented due to COVID-19.

What I would like to say is I am putting a proposal on the table to change the structure of the awards. I would like to see the clubs nominate 3 or 4 horses per category to go forward for a public vote with all the winners not announced until the Awards Ceremony, which we can hopefully arrange before the start of next season.

Well, that's it for now, I would like to thank Julie, Sarah, Kayleigh, Mandy and Karen and all the contributors for another excellent BHRC publication, which is full of great content. We are sorry there is no historical piece this time, we hope Colin can resume normal service very soon. Hope you enjoy this latest edition.

Yours in sport.

Darren Owen
BHRC Chairman

BRANT DUNSHEA

In this edition of the Calendar we caught up with Brant Dunshea, Chief Regulatory Officer of the British Horseracing Authority (BHA). Although holding a prominent role in thoroughbred racing, Brant remains passionate about harness racing and here shares his memories and expertise.

When did you become interested in harness racing?

I don't actually remember a time when harness racing wasn't part of my life. My family in Australia were always involved in the sport and my grandfather was a member of the Leech family in central Victoria, a name synonymous with the early days of Trotters in Australia. My earliest memories as a child involved Saturday nights in Melbourne, first at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds and then Moonee Valley during the late 70's and early 80's. At that time my uncle owned and trained an exceptionally talented pacer called Barts Gamble who won 20 races including the



Brant Dunshea with his own 'Got Swagger'

Group 1 3YO Galaxy Grand Slam at Moonee Valley defeating a horse called Garrys Advice. Garrys Advice was the best horse in the land and considered unbeatable having already won 32 races by mid-way through its 3YO year, so that was a rather remarkable night I'll never forget. It was fitting that some years later the first horse I bred, and then the first horse I trained and drove in a race were both by old Barts Gamble, but typically neither had the same ability!

Tell us about your professional involvement in harness racing in your native Australia?

I took a decision in my early 20's to move into the administrative side of the sport and in the early 90's started a cadetship as a Steward with Harness Racing Victoria (HRV). The regulatory role seemed to work for me and before long I'd progressed to Chairman of Stewards. Over 20 years and two separate stints with HRV I worked across all regulatory functions. In my final 5 years with HRV I was Chief Operating Officer and was responsible for not only all regulatory functions but also managing our relationship with key wagering and broadcast partners Tabcorp and SKY Racing. In that role I was also responsible for managing a progressive international strategy for HRV, particularly with respect to the growth of Trotting and exploiting international revenue opportunities in Europe, which is probably how I eventually ended up in this part of the world.

You hold a prominent position at the BHA, in your opinion what makes British thoroughbred racing special?

There are so many things about British Thoroughbred racing which make it incredible. The history of the sport and the unique diversity of

racecourses across the country are embedded in our heritage. Our trainers and Jockeys are world leaders and our horses claim many of the best races across the world with remarkable regularity. Jump racing in Britain is very special and sets it apart from the rest of the world. One of my first mentors as a steward was a former jockey by the name of Tom McGinley who rode Crisp in all his races prior to him coming to the UK, so for me I do find those three days in April at Aintree rather extraordinary and special.

Tell us about your role at the BHA?

I'm the Chief Regulatory Officer at the BHA. In that role I'm responsible for all regulatory functions of the sport both on the racecourse and off. I'm incredibly fortunate to have an exceptional team of professional staff around me who make the task of keeping on top of so many issues much more manageable.

You have been heavily involved in setting racing's protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic, are you happy with the way racing has handled the whole situation?

Covid-19 has been a difficult challenge for everyone. Whilst I led the industries resumption group, an incredible amount of work was done by many from across the industry to get us to the point where we were the first major sport to return on 1 June. I believe that was a incredible achievement by the industry and the approach we've adopted has ensured we've been able to continue to race behind closed doors despite the challenges of local lockdown. Of course we all want to return to normal conditions as soon as we can and let's hope the national conditions in relation to Covid-19 can allow that sooner rather than later.

A key issue for both harness and thoroughbred racing is equine welfare, which brings us onto the whip. It has been suggested the whip should be dispensed with, would you be in favour of such a move for harness racing?

The Thoroughbred industries independent Horse Welfare Board published a new strategic plan and made a recommendation earlier in 2020 that the British Horseracing Authority should conduct a

consultation on the use of the whip in racing. I will lead that process and believe it's possible that the whip rules in British racing may change again following that consultation however, what those changes may look like are still unknown. The Thoroughbred and Standardbreds are very different breeds and I think that whatever reforms may be contemplated for harness racing need to be relevant to that code.

Personally I have raced one of my own horses in Norway where use of the whip is not permitted and for him it made no difference, but of course every horse is different.

You are involved with the European Horserace Scientific Liaison Committee, can you tell us about this organisation?

I'm a Director of EHSLC which was originally formed by the Racing Authorities of Ireland, Great Britain and France to work towards harmonised conditions for doping control for any horse racing within those jurisdictions. Membership was later extended to include the Racing Authorities of Germany and Italy and, more recently, the Scandinavian

countries. A number of the member bodies, namely France and the Scandinavia, include the Trotting regulators within our working groups therefore EHSCL undertakes research and work to harmonise on Anti-Doping rules and issues across both Thoroughbred and Trotting in Europe.

Ex British and Irish bred pacers are enjoying considerable success in North America, is there anything we in Britain can do to ensure there are benefits for the sport here?

From what I've observed there is an increasing interest in improving the pacing breed here in Britain and Ireland which would be assisting in that success in North America. I think a similar interest in improving the Trotting breed in the UK and Ireland would come with similar benefits in Europe.

With France just across the water, do you think we in Britain should be looking at the European product in the future?

I find it interesting that there isn't a greater relationship with Europe in

Britain with respect to the sport. In Thoroughbred racing our trainers race in France all the time and take advantage of the tremendous stake money and yet this does not seem to be something that motivates British harness trainers. I've many friends who breed and race horses in North America and I'm well aware of how costly it is. Trotting is the global gait and the prize money in Sweden and in particular France is fantastic, so to me Britain's proximity to Europe lends itself to an incredible opportunity to grow the sport for all. My Trainer in Sweden ships his horses the 14 hours down to France to race all the time where he races in maiden races with his French bred horses for 12-14,000 Euros in prize money.

Tell us about your involvement in breeding and ownership? Also, what would your personal harness racing ambition be?

My formative years in the sport were spent under the guidance of a trainer in Melbourne who had great success with Trotters, Clinton Welsh.

Therefore I've always had a passion for the Trotter.

Over recent years I've bred and raced a number of horses in Scandinavia and been incredibly fortunate with the success we had. A few years ago my partner and I had two incredible older horses called Rio de Janeiro (DK) and Nanok DJuhm (DK), who over an 18 month period won 15 races in Sweden and Denmark between them. At one point Rio won three on end at the national track in Denmark, Charlottenlund, Trotting a 1.56 mile and old Nanok brought me my greatest memory in the sport winning the 2016 Swedish Derby Monte race at Jagersro running a 1.58 mile rate for the 2140m under saddle. Nanok was a great old horse and when we retired him he'd won 33 races and been placed 40 times.

I'm now down to one horse for the time being, a 2YO filly by S.J.'s Caviar called Got Swagger (DK) who I bred and own myself. She's incredibly well bred and so far she has done everything I could have hoped. She is presently in training in Sweden and although she's eligible for the Swedish 2YO Breeders Crown I have no interest in pushing her to race yet, with the hope that she can be good enough to race in the big 3 & 4YO races in Denmark and Sweden. I will

keep Swagger and eventually breed from her (I have my hopes for a Bold Eagle or Readly Express experiment!).

At some point in the future my ambition is to breed, race and train a small number of my own horses in Europe from a base here in Britain.... And one day hopefully have a horse good enough to race in the big races in France or Sweden.

Thinking about the sport globally, which pacers and trotters would you nominate as the best you have seen?

Pacer - Mr Feelgood (US) I have always thought was one of the best I've seen, there will never be another pacer in history that wins the Little Brown Jug, Inter Dominion, Hunter and Victoria Cups. He was a superstar and I had the pleasure of officiating over many of those great victories in Australia.

Trotter - Bold Eagle (FR). I was at Solvalla the day he broke the European mile record and ran around 1.50 in a heat of the Elitloppet, he has been one of the all time greats. There was also a Trotter in Australia in the 80's and 90's called Knight Pistol who is still the only Australian bred Trotter



Brant Dunshea and Got Swagger working on the straight track in Sweden

to win a Group 1 race in Europe, what he did in Australia from enormous handicaps was nothing short of phenomenal.

Finally, you are a keen follower of the European trotting circuit, can you give us a young horse to follow?

I'll give you two:

Ecurie D (DK) - 4YO bred by JP Dubois who has won 11 of 12. He will play a key role in the EU Masters races over the coming years.

Empire (DK) - 4YO who has won 9 of 13 starts trained by Thomas Malmqvist in Sweden. I can't see anything beating him in the Danish

Derby in late August and like Ecurie D he will feature prominently on the EU circuit over the next few years.

A big thank you to Brant Dunshea, Chief Regulatory Officer, British Horseracing Authority for taking the time to answer our questions, hopefully he will continue to share his vast experience with us in the future.

Darren Owen

If any reader would like an article published or has any suggestions for articles in The Calendar please send details to either:

Heulwen at the BHRC office - bhrc.office@yahoo.co.uk, **OR TO** Julie at julie.park4@gmail.com



The Oakwood prefix is now a well known name in the sport of harness racing globally regarding breeding, racing, and the now famous VDM Racing Festival in Dublin, Ireland.

The 2 men behind the Oakwood prefix are brothers Derek and James Delaney from Co.Offaly, Ireland, who have kindly given me their time for an insight into the Oakwood Stud and the initiative behind the 6 horses exported recently to the USA.

Derek and James Delaney used to help out

at the Wallace's Newtown Stables in Dublin when they were just kids 30 odd years ago and inevitably caught the bug for harness racing. This led to the ownership of several racehorses over 20 years, such as Hotspur (Handsome Sum x Red Emilie) who won 13 races and the great little filly Carmel Camden (No Pan Intended x Pan Cullottes) who at 2yo won 4 out of 5 starts. Carmel is now part of their band of broodmares at Oakwood Stud

Derek said "We have always had a keen interest in breeding horses and when James purchased a farm surrounded by trees back in 2002 we named it Oakwood Stud. We purchased some USA mares and gave all the resulting foals the Oakwood prefix, this was in and around the same time that frozen semen became available in the U.K.



and Ireland from Alabar Stallions, Australia. We bred some of our mares to Safely Kept, Armbro Operative and Village Jasper and from those matings we bred one of our all time favourite horses, the grey gelding Oakwood Outlaw, he was by Armbro Operative x Snow Whitey (Laag) in 2007.

He won the 2010 IHRA 3yo of the year and as breeders we really enjoyed the whole experience.

Then in more recent years the VDM has had a big influence on our breeding operation, back in 2011 our youngest brother Vincent died suddenly from a massive heart attack and in 2012 we set up the VDM race in his memory and with the aim of stimulating the breeding and stakes racing it seems to have worked out pretty well to date for everybody involved in the sport, I know it has personally allowed us

to become a more professional breeding operation and to invest in our broodmare band and stallions. We now have 10 resident mares and 3 stallions on our 2020 roster, with frozen semen available in Ireland and the UK from world champions Always B Miki and Sweet Lou thanks to the support from Adam Bowden of Diamond Creek Farm and Foreclosure stands at Oakwood Stud".

Oakwood Inittowinit who was recently exported to the USA after his success in the UK with 7 wins, 3 Group 1 races and at 2 was BHRC 2yo colt of the year, and a record of 1.59.6 (H) and £15,862 earnings. Oakwood Inittowinit is by Foreclosure (Rocknroll Hanover) x Abbey Won (The Panderosa).

His dam Abbey Won was the first high priced mare that we ever purchased for





the stud back in 2013 from the Harrisburg Sales. She cost 33k in foal to Dragon Again. We left her in Canada to foal down and bred her back to Sportswriter, after she foaled a filly Oakwood Dragoness, which we have now added to our brood mare band, we then flew them home to Ireland.

She has produced the winners of over 1.5 million dollars to date and has two sub 1.50 performers and one in 1.50.3.

We bred her to Foreclosure because we knew the cross worked and he had been bred to some Western Hanover line mares in the USA. Going on looks they are both beautiful individuals and of the stocky build, so we figured this would also

come into play in the resulting foal which it did. Oakwood Inittowinit is a very handsome horse, he was actually born on the day of Vincent's daughter Rihanna's communion and we all watched as he was born on the CCTV from the phone at the restaurant whilst the staff delivered him at home and we all said he's going to be a special one.

Oakwood Inittowinit was recently exported to race in the USA, where he has continued his racing success. He has raced 9 times and won 5, second once, third once with a record of 1.50.3 (F) and \$26,065.

Which leads me onto the next question, I asked Derek about the story/initiative

behind the 6 UK/Irish horses recently exported to race in the USA. Derek said "we have a very good relationship with Mark Weaver, he's an owner in the USA and is heavily involved in the Burke Stable.

We met him back in 2014 at the Jug, when his horse Limelight Beach won it and we have remained friends with him ever since. We actually purchased Foreclosure from him and Ron Burke back in 2015 and we also have frozen semen from their stallion, Sweet Lou, here in Ireland and the UK. So basically what happened was I had been at Mark to start buying horses from over this side of the pond for years but he didn't think it would work for him, and then when he saw some UK exports racing well in the States he thought maybe this could work and was willing to give it a try and asked us to act as agents for him and Ron Burke to try to purchase some horses that we felt would do okay over there.

A list of 30 horses was put together and I reached out to the owners to see if they would be for sale, some owners didn't want to sell, some were fair and some wanted a little too much, so we ended up with the 6 we sent out and they are happy with the overall outcome. The 6 horses are racing well and are doing their breeders and previous owners in the UK/Ireland proud".

Oakwood Inittowinit

(Foreclosure x Abbey Won)

Races x 9, Wins x 5, Seconds x 1, Third x 1, Earnings \$26,065, Record of 1.50.3 (F)

Father Ted

(Arts Conquest x Apopka Denise)

Races x 6, wins x 2, Second x 3, Earnings \$15,008, Record 1.52.3 (F)

Porterstown Chris

(Doonbeg x Miladys Pleasure)

Races x 7, Wins x 2, Second x 2, Earnings \$11,225, Record 1.50.4 (F)

Itsmycheck

(Check on Jack x Judy Hall)

Races x 7, Wins x 5, Third x 1, Earnings \$20,196, Record 1.50.4 (F)

Greenhill Debatable

(Well Said x Well Read)

Races x 10, Wins x 3 Second x 2, Earnings \$17,705, Record 1.53.1(H)

Greenhill Hanover

(Bettors Delight x Artaffection)

Races x 8, Wins x 5, Second x 1, Earnings \$22,015, Record 1.52.1 (F)

In total that's 22 wins from 47 runs, an amazing strike rate of 47%.

Derek said "As breeders of Oakwood Inittowinit, we are extremely proud and delighted with what he has achieved both in the UK and USA to date. One of our main goals we set out to do as a stud is to breed quality horses, good enough to compete anywhere on the world stage and he's fulfilled that dream for us, being 100% home bred on the farm, so we are just super proud of him, his dam and his sire.

We love to follow all the horses that we have bred and raised at Oakwood stud and

we get a great buzz following their success on the race track and for their owners, winning races, it's the end result for us and why we are in the business".

Derek and James Delaney at Oakwood Stud have certainly set their standards high and would like to keep introducing world class stallions to their live and frozen semen roster.

They are also looking forward to seeing the Foreclosure offspring racing in Australia in the near future. They have sent frozen semen down to KTC Bloodstock for the past couple of years now and the breeders love them, his eldest offspring are now yearlings.

Oakwood stud also announced recently

that they will kindly be sponsoring the Breeders Crown UK and Ireland 2yo colts and fillies finals to be held at Tir Prince Raceway on the 29th August.

Wishing Derek and James Delaney at Oakwood Stud continued success in the breeding sheds and on the race track.

Thanks to Derek and James at Oakwood Stud, to Mandy Stanley, Eryl Williams & Derek Delaney for the content and Derek and James Delaney and Sarah Thomas for all the photographs.



Other horses running over the water

Name	Starts	1st	2nd	3rd	Time	Prize money
Blackwell Ruby	9	7	2	0	1.51.2	\$57,100
Gentleman Jim	11	8	3	0	1.50.3	\$20,380
Matticulous	12	4	2	2	1.49.1	\$65,065
Olivia Camden	No information at time of going to press					
Robyn Camden	7	3	1	1	1.53.1	\$46,150
Evenwood	14	8	3	1	1.49.2	\$138,000
Sonofagun						

Thanks to Eryl Williams and Derek Delaney for the regular updates on the progress of all horses. For those interested in following the progress of these horses regular information can be found on Eryl's Facebook page. Information is also regularly shared on the BHRC and Northern Harness Racing Facebook pages. We hope to make this a regular feature. We plan to run a feature on Matticulous in our December Calendar.

THE MAGNIFICENT DREAM



EVENWOOD SONOFAGUN (GB)

P. 1.49.2

2012 B.G.

The Firepan (Artsplace) x
Im the Last (Raque Bogart)

As a breeder of harness racehorses, we all have ambitions and dreams to breed the best. Whether you are a small family breeder or a commercial breeder of horses, we all work hard to produce the best, and after a lifetime competing and breeding in harness racing, the Nicholson



family at Evenwood Stables can say their dreams came true when EVENWOOD SONOFAGUN was the first British bred horse in history to break the sub 1.50 mark when winning the \$36000 Preferred Pace at Mohawk (Canada) in a time of 1.49.2 by 51/2 lengths on Saturday 6th June 2020.

The beginning The Nicholson family said "they were very, very

proud of Gunner and it will always be a very special breeder moment for them all." EVENWOOD SONOFAGUN (or Gunner as he is more affectionately known) was born at Evenwood Stables, Evenwood, a little village just outside Bishop Auckland, UK.

The Nicholson family bought his dam, I'm the Last (Raque Bogart) from a family friend, Joe Mac, she was an average race mare, but they purchased her with a view to breed. His sire, The Firepan (Artsplace) was bought from Christy Dunne in Ireland, Mr Nicholson said he had followed The Firepan throughout his 2yo and 3yo race career in the USA, so when he had the chance to buy him he did!

EVENWOOD SONOFAGUN (Gunner) was born and raised at the Nicholson family's Evenwood Stables. The Nicholson family said: "He was a very likeable little character, with a great attitude and very intelligent. He had a swagger all of his own, like I'm the boss about the field. He definitely had a spark in his eyes."

On the move As a yearling Gunner was sold to Callam McKenzie in Scotland, where he was broken and trained and started his early success as a racehorse. It was in his early races that he first showed signs that he looked like he was going to be a 'force to be reckoned with', and have a big future in the sport.

Crossing the border Gunner returned to England in 2016 to be trained by Alexis Laidler, after early success and in the hands of the Laidler Team, eagle eyed Raymond and Frank Huschka quickly made another purchase. Gunner's record needs no explaining, he went on to win every major handicap in the U.K. as well as top class FFA's, taking new race records that had stood for years along the way, also setting a new world record for pacing under saddle. Gunner showed he was a true champion, winning over different distances and different surfaces.

Crossing the ocean As one of the best horses to race in the U.K. over the years, it was decided that Gunner should to go to Canada and race. In November 2019 he started his racing career in Canada, where he has continued to dine at the top table, having had 14 races, recording 8 wins (3 of which have been high grade races), and amassed prize money in excess of \$138,000, in fact only missing out on prize money once. For a short while he held the record as the fastest GB export at 1.49.2.

His stablemate Matticulous recently not only hooked up with him but also took away that record when recording his own personal best at 1.49.1, however it certainly something to be proud of being the ex-trainer of the two fastest GB exports.

Gunner was "a horse of a lifetime" and will return to the UK to graze in the fields here when his racing career is over.

**"Gunner - The Heart of a Lion"You have done us proud
Truly a horse of a lifetime**

Mandy Stanley

The number one skill in life is not giving up

Brett Corbett's life has recently been turned upside down but the 24 year old has tackled the situation head on and refuses to give up on what he can achieve.

Brett who is a regular on the Wales & West circuit became involved in harness racing, like the majority of us due to family. As he tells it his father Dai was a keen supporter of the 'flapping' galloper scene but as their races began dwindling in the local area they looked for another equine discipline. Luckily they found harness racing and have had an interest in the sport ever since.

Brett also has a keen interest in Motocross endurance and achieved numerous successes in both the Welsh and British championships. He looked at harness racing as a new challenge and decided to go down the driving route. In 2018 he passed his driving test and had a handful of drives, which only whetted his appetite for the sport.

Brett decided he wanted to further his skills and see harness racing at a higher level and with the help of STAGBI spent a month in Victoria, Australia with trainer Mattie Craven at the start of 2019. There he got to work with the likes of million dollar winner Hectorjayjay (Dream Away/



Sheer Finesse) and his pick of the yard Shanway (Bettors Delight/Grace Way) who he admits would have been on a flight home if he had the money to spare.

One thing in particular he took from his experience is how well trainers encourage junior drivers and help and coach them when starting out in the sport. There are so many more opportunities for newcomers to get aboard horses with trainers given incentives to use junior drivers. Brett thinks this is perhaps something we in the UK could pursue further as he believes the southern hemisphere do this particularly well. They allow a driver to remain in the junior ranks (our C class) for up to 5 years, where they have specific junior drivers races (which allow trainers one win penalty free in these events to encourage entries) but also allow the junior driver to claim (can only claim until they reach a set number of wins) an allowance in a standard race. As an example Dexter Dunn achieved champion junior driver on four occasions during that time he also won the first four

of his ten national driver championships.

Returning from Oz with some experience under his belt Brett spent the 2019 season trying to pick up C Class drives as and when he could.

However by the end of the year things would change dramatically. Brett had been suffering pain in his right leg since the summer of 2018 and after numerous visits to the hospital and 18 months of tests the pain got so bad he was rushed to hospital in Shrewsbury. There doctors finally discovered that his blood was not flowing correctly and his blood was clotting between the knee and foot. Brett was diagnosed with lupus and critical limb ischaemia which occurs when there is a sudden lack of blood flow to a limb. In November they attempted two vein bypasses but both unfortunately failed. Brett was then dealt a terrible blow, this left no option but to amputate his right leg below the knee.

Doctors had told him that if the vein bypasses were unsuccessful amputation was the next step which gave him some time to prepare. However the realisation of becoming an amputee was undoubtedly difficult and it took him two days following the operation to look down under the hospital sheets.

Since then he has spent his time looking forward. He believes that you have to play the hand you are dealt with in life. Brett's positive attitude is to be admired despite



everything that has happened he says that there are plenty of people worse off than him. Brett admits no one is more surprised than himself at how well he has dealt with it.

Whilst undergoing the operation Philip Cooper a friend from motocross set up a Go Fund Me page to help him purchase a wheelchair and prosthetic leg. He admits he wasn't originally in favour of the idea. He didn't want people to feel sorry for him or feel he was asking for money. The generosity of people including many within harness racing has been tremendous. The kind donations has meant that he will be able to purchase a prosthetic leg with a mechanical ankle which should allow him a greater degree of movement.

Like many things this year Covid 19 has affected Brett's rehabilitation and his



physio therapy had to be delayed. This must have been frustrating as he is determined to get back walking as soon as he can. Just this week his new leg has been fitted and Brett has started taking his first steps.

There are already plans in place for him to get back to motocross riding with friends adapting a bike for him. He also hopes to get back in the cart and has had trainers offering C Class drives for the 2021 season. He's been extremely grateful for the people within harness racing who have all been there helping, sending well wishes and visiting him in hospital. We are a small sport which at times may have its disadvantages but that close knit community can be just what you need to help you get through what life has to throw at you.

Brett would like to add a personal message to thank everybody, but especially his mum, girlfriend Meg, Gareth Dowse and also Lee and Kayla Morris for everything they have done to help him over the past 18 months, as well as all his friends and to everyone who has donated. Brett's Go Fund Me page can be found at

www.gofundme.com/bretts-prosthetic-leg-and-wheelchair

Good Luck with the recovery and we wish you all the very best with everything you hope to achieve.

Kayleigh Evans

David Morton

(May 1940 - August 2020)

It was with sincere sadness on Thursday 13th August the BHRC were informed of the passing of one of our sport's greatest characters and supporters. David Morton's death will have saddened many in the harness racing world here in the UK and beyond.

Due to his ill-health over the last couple of years Davie was unable to attend any race meetings but in the previous seven decades his involvement and influence was greatly felt. He can be remembered as a breeder, owner, trainer and driver as well as a track owner and major sponsor in the sport, a sport he truly loved.

His patronage to harness racing over the years was legendary and his generosity knew no bounds when it came to causes he supported. Davie's greatest attribute in the sport may well have been his ability to pick out quality young horses and having built up a very successful business empire over the years was able to follow through and purchase many of those that caught his eye.

The list of top class horses owned by David Morton over the years brings back many memories and to list them all would require a lot of ink but to single out one or two of what I think were his favourites I would have to mention Young Hurricane & Eastern Star from the early years. Rambling Lane, Sea Pigeon, Stepaway, Saunders Star & Red Banner



(going to Canada, successfully racing, then returning in foal to Governor Skipper who commanded a stud fee of \$25,000) from the late seventies in to the eighties. His Famous Musselburgh Pace winner (a race he so desperately loved and wanted to win for decades) Red Governess from the 90's - that was the very foal that came back inside Red Banner on her return from Canada, and of course his favourite of them all Stoneriggs Mystery the horse of a lifetime who only recently was voted best British standardbred of all time.

He exported other horses such as Red Wilma who went overseas along with Stoneriggs Quality and Stoneriggs QE2, all on the same plane - what a cargo that was. All of which went on to race and

win on the same night in Canada, being trained by Keith Simpson and driven by Stewart Sowerby. All three horses later returned to the UK with Stoneriggs Quality going on to breed what could be considered to be one of Davie's favourite horses – Stoneriggs Mystery.

Scrolling through social media you will find many fitting tributes to Davie from far and wide in the sport from those who knew him publicly and those with very personal stories of him, here are just a couple of the tributes we have received:

Paul Amphlet (known to many as Marbles), who has been a very close friend of the family for many, many years, when reminiscing not only about all the quality racehorses that he owned and bred both in the UK but also overseas. He also talked about the generosity of Davie, in not only sponsoring a range of premier events, however what few of us knew is that Davie was a major sponsor of many smaller events (each year) up and down the country and not just in Scotland. The sponsorship came with no conditions attached, and was done purely to keep smaller events running.

Although harness racing was his passion he also had an interest in greyhound racing and owned and raced greyhounds and sponsored many other sporting clubs especially in areas where he had business links. He was a truly kind and generous man, generous with his money, his time and in sharing his passion, I will really miss him.

“We have known David for many years, once known he was a hard man to forget. He was passionate and knowledgeable about harness racing and his generosity knew no bounds. He was our friend and we will miss him dearly”. Our condolences, Michael, Sheelagh and family.

In his touching tribute on the livestream from Tir Prince, Jim McNally not only touched on areas already mentioned such as all the fabulous horses that Davie owned and bred, his generosity but also a fact that many had forgotten that in support of the sport Davie not only frequently raced at Corbiewood but that actually at one stage he owned it. In summing up his tribute he left us with Davie's comment on some of the horses he had had:

“I like to own a good horse”

Davie you certainly owned, bred, trained and drove some of the best.

There have been many tributes paid to a man who was so obviously well liked and respected in this the harness racing family, thank you to Ryan O'Neil, Paul Amphlet, Michael Lord and Jim McNally for your memories. He may be gone but he certainly will not be forgotten. I sincerely hope he is up there watching down on Mystery in the field with his friends at home.

The BHRC wish to express their sincere condolences to those closest to him, namely his wife Wilma, his family and closest friends. May he rest in peace.



Tir Prince Raceway - Derby Night

Saturday 8th August



RACE ONE: The night started with the 1st division of the 2yo fillies G1 Junior Welsh Dragonesss where the favourite Said to be Sweet led out and Ayr Ambition (with Vicky Gill in the seat) dropping into second, stalking the leader throughout. Ayr Ambition pulled out and started her challenge coming off the home turn and ran on up the straight to win comfortably, in a time of 2.03.4, a great drive by Vicky Gill and trained by her father John Gill and giving her Scottish breeders and owner, Ryan O Neil, a visit to the winners circle.



RACE TWO: Was the 1st division of the G1 3yo BHRC OAKS, where a competitive group of fillies went to post. Frisco Gottago with James Haythornthwaite dictated the pace from the front for much of this 1.5m Oaks division, but the race got busy in the last quarter with Oakwood Letsboogie coming out on top to hold the fast finishing Ring Me Back in second, in a time of 3.11.8. Oakwood Letsboogie gave her owner C Cook a Group 1 win and her trainer and driver Michael O Mahony his first Group 1 race of the night.



🏆 **RACE THREE:** the G1 Junior Welsh Dragon 2yo colts saw the favourite, the very classy USA Artspeak import, Yerkes Hanover with Rocker Laidler in the sulky lead all the way, winning unchallenged stopping the clock in 2.05.1. GDs Thunder who ran a very respectable race finished second. This made it 3 from 3 for Yerkes Hanover and his owner E McCarthy and Team Laidler.



🏆 **RACE FOUR:** Division 2 of the G1 BHRC OAKS 3yo fillies saw a new track record performance for the 1.5m. Rainbow Writer and her connections made the trip over from Ireland, her second visit to Tir Prince this season. The filly led, dominated and made all to win going away by 15 Lengths in a new track record time of 3.05.7. Impressive! With a race for placings seeing Rhyds Seequin in second and Rhyds Romance in third. The Sportswriter filly, Rainbow Writer gave her owner B Grendon, trainer P Kane snr, and Driver P Kane jnr, a Group 1 winner, her second stakes win on the track this season.



RACE FIVE: Division 2 G1 Junior Welsh Dragoness 2yo fillies saw Ayr Contessa driven by James Haythornthwaite make all, they led out and dictated the race. Imperial Attitude driven by M Lord sat in second and challenged Contessa up the home straight, but Contessa held off the challenge to win in a time of 2.04.9. A Group 1 victory for owner N Holgate, trained by Teresa Haythornthwaite and driven by son James Haythornthwaite. Also giving the breeders Ayr Standardbreds their second Group 1 winner for 2 year old fillies on the night.



🏆 **RACE SIX:** was a top class FFA Le Trot over 1m Joby Randall on his own Broadway Du Borg led out and calmly held the lead, winning convincingly, in 2.03, with a race for placings, Calimero Brouets finishing second and Birdy Match in third. Broadway Du Borg has made it 2 from 2 at Tir Prince now for his trainer R Wilson and his enthusiastic owner/driver Joby Randall.



🏆 **RACE SEVEN:** G1 BHRC DERBY 3yo over 1.5m, with just 4 runners (the absentee A Rocknroll Star) it was always going to be a tactical affair. Whichguyami drew 1 and led out, Matteuceous was unsettled round the first turn, but quickly all settled in to single file, into the back straight for the final time the field started to warm up and Michael O Mahony tipped out Ima Happy Fella from last to show an electric turn of foot to come round the field down the back to drive into the last quarter mile solo and won pulling away by 13.5 lengths in a



clock of 3.06.7. This gave trainer and driver Michael O Mahony and his team their first BHRC DERBY Winner and second Group1 win of the night. The over whelmed and delighted owner Geoff Robson was the very proud breeder and owner of Ima Happy Fella, it also being his first Derby winner. A Classic night for all his connections.



RACE EIGHT: The last race G1 BHRC PACING CLASSIC 1 1/4m Northern Pride was an absentee, still leaving a field of 9 top class pacers. Merrington Movingup was going into the race with 3 wins on the bounce, he led out and dictated the pace. The field got busy in the last quarter with Rockin Mambo and Marc Jones in the seat sweeping round the field on the last turn to challenge Movingup in the home straight going on to win by 1.5 Lengths in 2.30.5. Rockin Mambo gave his connections, owner, trainer and driver Marc and wife Jenny Jones another memorable night and a GROUP 1 victory . Merrington Movingup was second and Miraculous was third. See next page for photo.

Thank you to Mandy Stanley for the editorial and Sarah Thomas Equine Photography for all images.



A Champions night for all winning CONNECTIONS





MEDIA UPDATES:

Sarah Thomas continues to work on new initiatives to promote harness racing certainly across the UK if not around the globe. Since our last Calendar edition in June Sarah has been instrumental in producing a programme on YouTube called The Sulky Show. So far we have had six editions (they are all there for you to watch), there have been a number of guests on these programmes and they are certainly worth a watch.



Sarah can never be accused of letting the grass grow under her feet, her latest challenge has been to produce videos 'from the track', and I mean 'from the track', encouraging drivers to wear her 360° camera as well as normal body cameras. Watch her usual media channels on Facebook for the results.

THROUGH A FANS EYES

I'm writing this at the end of July, usually we are working our way through a schedule of work at home and going racing while preparing for our holidays which usually commences with a trip to Portmarnock and the Vincent Delaney meeting.

At the beginning of May Mr D and I were race-ready, the trailer tent was prepared (we love our camping) and this way we save money on our accommodation too. This winter David upgraded the car its more economical he told me, it's been named you've guessed it Mambo, unfortunately the furthest we have travelled in Mambo is to the farm shop, in fact I think the lawn mower has covered more miles and certainly used more fuel.

We are missing live racing terribly; the pubs and restaurants opening has little interest to us, and we have realised that through lockdown it's only our harness racing friends we've missed, without them and racing we appear to live a lockdown lifestyle, it seems to be the norm for us. We don't have family or friends to visit so thank goodness for live streaming, you've given us hope and something to look forward to each week.

This year, instead of us travelling all over the country, the racing has come to us in our own sitting room from York, Tir Prince, Portmarnock and Annaghmore. After a few early hiccups (which was to be expected), and a lot of hard work from all involved live streaming has moved onwards and upwards. York led the way with the streaming, providing extremely enjoyable weekly viewing. Rasus from the S4C's archives in between Tir Prince races captures the heart and how we feel about harness racing, feeling the goosebumps when reliving those classic moments.

One Sunday afternoon I sat with phone in hand waiting for results from Amman

Valley watching Corbiewood with the chrome cast and to my left the tablet with Ladyford Dollar winning in Portmarnock, surrounded by sheets of paper, although not able to be track side we have still able to soak up the atmosphere. Technology is a wonderful thing (when it works) and when/if you understand it.

A big thank-you to Eryl Williams keeping us in the loop on Facebook with the ex pat horses, and to David Edwards for coming up with the tipster competition, a bit of fun to while away the lockdown hours. I think over all we are level pegging but I do feel the 'Davids' ganged up on me a bit.

For us this year the most fantastic experience was our first ever stable visit with the lovely patient hardworking couple, Kayleigh Evans and Michael O'Mahony where one very windy morning in February, we followed them around their stables, meeting their stable stars, sadly though some of the footage couldn't be used as the wind drowned us out. Many thanks to you both for being our guinea pigs, a big learning curve for David and I, but we managed it. So look out you maybe next, never did we ever think we'd attempt something like this, thank you to Darren and Sarah for your help and support, and of course for having faith in us.

The quality of racing we have enjoyed this season sat in our living room has been top notch. Why oh why its not televised on ITV on a Saturday afternoon I don't know, however 'mighty oaks from little acorns do grow', so fingers crossed.

Mel Dandridge



ULCERS

I have suspected for sometime that one of our horses had ulcers, he didn't really display any of the classic symptoms, but I just knew that something wasn't quite right. Eventually we had him scoped and the vet confirmed that he did have ulcers.

We have used Omeprazole which helped, but I am guessing as with anybody else that has used it it is not straightforward, firstly it has a withdrawal period when racing and secondly it is quite cost prohibitive.

I was astonished to find (when researching equine ulcers) that it is reported that up to 85% of standardbreds and 90% of thoroughbreds have some level of gastric ulceration. With those shocking figures in mind, and with support from our local vet I have looked at other changes that we could implement to control ulcers in horses that have been diagnosed with them or things we can do to reduce the risk of other horses getting ulcers.

It appears that the suggested reasoning behind the high statistics in competition horses is the link to the environmental changes we impose on horses, restricted forage, high starch diets, intense exercise and stressful environments such as travelling and racing.

FIRSTLY: veterinary advice should always be sought for any horse who you suspect may have ulcers. A gastroscopy will confirm whether the horse has ESGUS (ulcers in the lower oesophagus, stomach or upper duodenum) or EGGUS (ulcers in lower glandular part of the stomach) or both. The treatment is slightly different for both. Your vet will also grade the ulcers.

Veterinary treatment (medication) is likely to be required in order for gastric ulcers to initially heal, however because of the withdrawal period prior to racing it is worth looking at other measures you can take to reduce the risk of ulcers. However it is worth remembering that management alone is unlikely to resolve the ulcer issue.

SECONDLY: speak to your feed rep, there are lots of different feeds on the market, they should be more than happy to help you - if not change brands!

THIRDLY: look at your routines and what you can do to change to help your horses, such as:

- Increased turnout
- Smaller/more frequent meals including roughage (preferably alfalfa)
- Use of beet pulp
- Feed supplements with antacid
- Increased rest periods/days off

7 TIPS FOR FEEDING HORSES PRONE TO GASTRIC ULCERS

Karon Brown (Thoroughbred Nutritionalist) has also suggested that appropriate nutritional management can help to reduce the risk, frequency and severity of gastric ulcers, even when other management changes such as a reduction in work or travelling are not possible. She suggests:

Maximise forage intake

Ideally forage should be fed ad lib. Saliva provides a natural buffer to stomach acid but unlike people, horses only produce saliva when they chew. Total forage intake should not be restricted to less than 1.5% bodyweight (dry matter) per day which on average, equates to approximately 9kg of hay (11kg if you intend to soak it) or 10-12kg of haylage for a 500kg horse without grazing.

Avoid long periods without forage

Stomach pH has been seen to drop in horses that have not eaten for several hours and in one study, the risk of gastric ulcers was found to be approximately 3.5 times higher in horses left for more than 6 hours without forage. Divide restricted rations into multiple 'servings', trying to make the first and last serving as early/ late as possible for horses stabled overnight. Try to provide access to forage while travelling too.

Provide access to forage/short

chopped fibre prior to exercise

Providing access to forage or feeding small amounts of short chopped fibre prior to exercise helps to create a 'fibre mat' which in turn, helps to prevent gastric acid 'splashing' up onto the sensitive, non-glandular (upper) region of the stomach.

Restrict starch intake

It is currently recommended that horses prone to gastric ulcers are fed less than 1g of non-structural carbohydrate (NSC: starch + water soluble carbohydrate) per kilogram bodyweight per meal and ideally less 2g NSC per kilogram bodyweight per day. For a 500kg horse this equates to less than 500g of NSC per meal and ideally less than 1kg of NSC per day. In practise:

- Base as much of the diet on forage as possible, balancers are ideal for horses that maintain weight easily on forage alone
- Avoid mixes and cereal based feeds – cereal grains are high in starch
- Choose fibre based feeds containing low/ restricted levels of starch

Add short chopped fibre to every meal to help increase chewing

Remember increased chewing = increased saliva production! Ideally choose a fibre containing alfalfa as the naturally high protein and calcium content is thought to help buffer stomach acid.

Feed no more than 2kg per meal (less for ponies)

Ideally, all new feeds should be weighed at least once but as a guide, 1 Stubbs scoop holds approximately 2kg of cubes, 1.5kg of mix and 300-500g of short chopped fibre/ chaff.

Avoid using concentrated electrolyte pastes.

In one study, multiple hypertonic electrolyte pastes were seen to significantly increase the number and severity of gastric ulcers (Holbrook et al, 2005).

If anybody has any questions about feeding a horse with suspected ulcers please contact Karon on:

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Thoroughbred Nutritionist (North) |
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29 Old Wolverton Road, Old Wolverton,
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FEEDBACK: This is the third of our revamped 'The Calendar' publications. We hope you are enjoying the reading content. Feedback on The Calendar had previously been quite negative as you felt in your words there was 'nowt in it'. We listened to you and have tried a different format. Let us know your views, we think it has improved but we need your views. Drop us a line either through Heulwen in the office or direct to Sarah, Julie, Mandy, Kayleigh or Karen.

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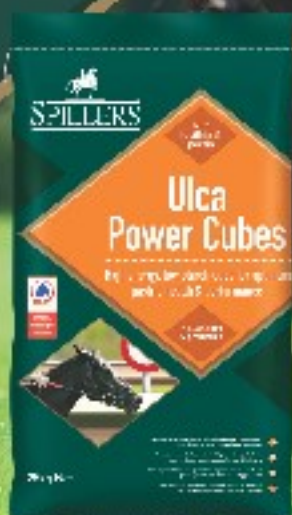
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or visit www.spillers-feeds.com



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FROM TRACK TO TRACKS

By Kath Ellis

As part of the welfare of standardbreds after racing I have always been passionate about them having an alternative career at the end of their time on the track, a new chapter.

We sold one (Howard's Express) who although qualifying never made it to the track. She went on to become a very successful endurance horse and it is something that has always interested me. However I knew absolutely nothing about the training of an endurance horse, so a big thank you to Kath Ellis who kindly shared some of her knowledge with us.

Kath's story We have in the past used several of our horses for endurance both after racing and during their racing career. Spike was a prime example, he won his 1st competitive endurance ride at Sherwood Pines then went out and won the Prakas 6 days later.

Talavary Mystic, was taken out of training as a 6 year old basically to give her a change and to calm her



down a bit with the view to starting racing her the following season, but she proved such a fantastic riding horse we decided to keep her at the job she was obviously enjoying and excelling at. She won almost every competition I entered her in ranging from 20 to 50 mile competition rides. In her 1st full season she became Reserve National Champion when competing under Sport Endurance regulations.

Then the following 2 consecutive years she became the National Champion for Sport Endurance, the year after I decided to join Endurance GB so had to restart as a novice and in just half a season she won the novice champion for



peak and forest.

Obviously this season has been on hold a bit but we aim to carry on again next year also with Brywins Tonto starting his novice year as Talavary Mystic steps up into the open class.

The training is almost identical to training a horse to race under harness, the only difference being is instead of giving them fast work twice a week I aim to give them a longer distance ride minimum of 10 miles at least once a week.

I feed the same food and the same supplements, I will admit it does take

a few competitive rides for the horses to realise that there is no need to go too fast, they soon realise they have a long way to go.

I try to ride at approximately 10 mph throughout the ride depending upon the terrain.

Standardbreds can hold their own and often seem to have more stamina than most other breeds including the highly rated Arabs. Should anybody be interested in taking part in an endurance ride, Endurance GB offer a 'try before you buy scheme' allowing you to participate in a long distance ride before you become a member. Details can be found on their



website. They also produce their own Endurance magazine. Well done to Sarah Thomas who back in Jan/Feb 2018 managed to get a two page spread in the magazine all about the standardbred and how suited to endurance they were.

As horses finish their career on the track why not consider giving them an alternative career?

More information about the sport of endurance can be found at:

www.sportendurance.co.uk

OR

www.endurancegb.co.uk

Or speak to our very own expert
Kath Ellis, I am sure she will be
only happy to guide you in the right
direction

Thank you to IndiePics photography

Contact one of our editorial team with success stories of standardbreds off the track. We hope to publish regular stories that demonstrate just how versatile this breed are.

THE ART OF SELECTION



Since 2014 you will have noticed the increased number of Trotters racing on the tracks of Great Britain as a result of the generous sponsorship of Le TROT (France's Trotting Governing Body) BUT HOW do these Trotteur Français end up in the stables of Great Britain's horse owners and trainers?



While these French horses may take their first steps onto their new home soil on a cold winter's morning, the process starts months earlier.

It starts with LeTrot posting an "Opération de Vente - Trotteur Français - Grande Bretagne" on their website seen by all French Breeders and Owners. It sets out the criteria of racehorse required and the price that British buyers will pay for them. From there, LeTrot send a list of all available horses to TROTBritain.

This first list can be a hundred or more and it is up to the team at TROTBritain to bring that list of horses down to a more workable number to inspect. This is the start of the real work, with hours spent going through

race videos and statistics. A horse's race times and earnings jump out at you when you are looking at lists of statistics, but French Trotting isn't as simple as just GO FAST & TURN LEFT. Has the horse raced from a mobile start or a volt (walk in and turn) start? Has it raced on the grass? Monté (saddle)? Left Handed? Right Handed? Amateur Drivers Races? All has to be taken into consideration and close attention is given to looking at how often a horse is disqualified, at what point in a race is it getting disqualified and why.

With a short list made of horses to view the selection team then head off to France for a short (usually three day) tour of the country's race tracks and training centres.





The core of the selection team are Jack Dowie, Emyr Edwards, Bill Green and Mike Evans with BHRC Hall Of Famer Ian Pimlott and trotting experts, Paul Mather and John Blissett regularly assisting, along with trotting enthusiasts Joe & Matty Quinn, Jody & Jack Foody, Marc Elvin and John Howard. The 2019 selection team also included Alan Haythornthwaite, a man who has won it all in Great Britain and is part of the team behind 2019 TROTBritain Horse Of The Year Emirat Du Levant.

These people take time off work and pay for their own travel for the love of the sport.

Once in France the hospitality shown to its British visitors by LeTrot is incredible. Emmanuelle Morvillers from LeTrot Département

International makes sure we don't have to worry about a thing. The selection team is there to do a job and she takes care of everything else. A mini bus chauffeurs the team between tracks, hotels and restaurants all across France's beautiful countryside with every detail organised by Emmanuelle. Damien Beau accompanies us, making his expertise available to assist our judgements. Damien is a part of Emmanuelle's team to work with international issues and also a race day steward at Vincennes and other French race tracks.

At the track, the art of selection has evolved and improved over the years. Back in 2014 the selection team simply watched horses work out but their local trainers decided how to work them. With each

passing year and a better understanding of what horses suit Britain's tracks and racing style the TROT Britain selection team has become more demanding of what it wants to see from the horses when they're working out.



Horses now all work left handed from a volt start over 2000m. For the first 1000m horses sprint upto three quarter speed, from 1000m to 1500m they are extended upto race speed and for the last 500m they are asked for maximum effort. During the workout the selection team is looking for horses that show good manners and a smooth trotting gait as the horses move through the gears. In a move that has improved the selection process even further, from November 2018 all horses being

considered for selection have been driven by British drivers in their workout. Having our drivers work these horses is now a key part of the process.

Once a horse is worked it is scored from 1 to 5 by all members of the team. If a horse scores 1 to 3 it is discarded, horses that score 4 or 5 are then inspected physically after their workout. Where any flaws can be seen a horse's score drops or it is rejected.

At the end of the tour the team sits down and all horses with an average score of 4+ are ranked. The required number of mares and gelding go into the hat for Emmanuelle and Damien to draw their proud new owners. Emmanuelle and her team then organise getting these horses from all over France to Grosbois, Paris for the transport to pick them up and finally make the journey to their new homes in Great Britain.

Buying a horse that you've never seen before isn't for everyone, but the many success stories show it can be an excellent option. Examples of horses that have gone on to do great things include:

Robec
T'es Trop Foot
Sulky Du Blequin
Show Business
Three Pack



Une Pebe
 Tenor Meslois
 Espoir Lila
 Eclair Du Torp
 Enez Leman
 Eliothrope
 Emirat Du Levant
 Valseur Du Cygne
 Ecume De Mer
 Equilea Du Hauty
 Diamant De Godrel
 Vincita
 Falcon De Melleray
 Cryos
 Blason
 Broadway Du Bourg
 Dame Major

Marc Elvin "Hospitality from LeTrot was second to none. I really enjoyed being part of the selection process,

getting to drive the different horses at different tracks."

Alan Haythornthwaite "There's a really good system in place to find the right horses and it shows. The ones getting picked since the British drivers have been trialing them are doing a really good job. I think everyone who has been part of the trips would agree that the hospitality shown to us has been outstanding."

Joe Quinn "The standard of horse we bring home has increased massively since we've been able to trial them and the way Emmanuelle & Damien look after us is amazing."

Matty Quinn "All the selection panel

have to agree that the horses are up to standard and anything with a question mark against them is left alone. The quality of horses we bring home is fantastic and the way we are treated by LeTrot is equally fantastic."

If you would like to purchase a Trotteur Français in the upcoming Sale please contact TROTBritain.

Michael Evans



AN UPDATE FROM IRELAND

It has been a really tough week for everyone associated in Irish harness racing, a week of recovery from the biggest and richest (€100,000 approximately) grass fixtures of our calendar, the Red John Memorial in Lyre, located just outside the very popular town of Clonakilty. This year, the fixture was faced with similar soundings to those of Tregaron and Aberystwth in the past, where a rain belt positioned itself over West Cork, and the extreme localised thunder showers created floods across the region. The decision was taken to postpone Saturdays 11 race card racing and hold it on the following day, along with the other remaining 10 races, a mammoth task, but thankfully the rain stayed away, and a successful meeting

was had. I know many BHRC members usually travel to Portmarnock annually to compete at the VDM but I hope that in years to come, that some members will travel to Cork to enhance the meeting even further, and considering this year all races only cost €100 to the connections and purses of €7000 to the winner of both finals, its complete value for money to race there.

Last weekend, was the first of our new handicap structure whereby the top 16 horses in both trotters and pacers competed in two eliminations, seeking to qualify for the finals. Many criticised this change at the start of the season but how this has changed racing at all venues. Every race has now gone so competitive,

with trainers trying to get their horses up the grading system as quick as they can to make the top 16 cut off point. For the two classics, the top 16 horses were spread from A to D, but this was due to the short run in period of racing from our commencement date. Trainers and connections now have nine weeks to get their horses up the ladder again for the next major handicap, the M50 Skip Hire & Recycling fixture at Portmarnock on the October bank holiday weekend, which also hosts the Irish Sire Stakes Races.

The Irish Sire Stakes Race Series is now being organised by the IHRA and I would like to take this opportunity to thank James Delaney for instigating the programme originally, for all his time and effort in promoting the event and handling all related queries. The 2020 event will be held on October 25th in conjunction with the M50 weekend. The March payments were deferred until **15th September** in light of Covid 19. Should any BHRC member have any queries about the Irish Sire Stakes going forward, please contact the IHRA office.

Whilst on the topic of juvenile racing, it would be disrespectful of me not to mention our 2020 Juvenile Series and the success of this event to date. My thanks to Darren, Craig & Mick for hosting the two eliminators at York for us and it is my intention to have a virtual meeting with the BHRC about the 2021 series in the coming weeks.

I am delighted to be able to inform you, that the IHRA are hosting a standardbred sale at Mullingar Equestrian centre on the Friday evening, prior to the juvenile finals weekend at Portmarnock. The sale will feature all 2020 yearlings from Oakwood Stud and Churchview Stables as well as other young and aged stock of pacers and trotters.

Overall racing in Ireland has gone from strength to strength in 2020, with full cards in all three regions of Annaghmore in Northern Ireland, Cork & Portmarnock and to date, we have now raced for **€426,000**. The IHRA is now on course to continue our fixtures to the end of November.

To conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all readers of this publication the very best of health in this unprecedented time and I look forward to welcoming you at one of our venues in the near future.

James Levis

Upcoming Premium Meetings in Ireland:
Sunday 27th September: IHRA Ladies Day @ Portmarnock Raceway, **Friday 9th October:** IHRA Sale @ Mullingar Equestrian Centre, Mullingar, Co Westmeath., **Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th October:** Juvenile Series Finals @ Portmarnock Raceway, **Saturday 17th October:** IHRA 3YO Trot Finals @ Annaghmore Raceway, **Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th October:** M50 Skip Hire & Recycling Weekend, plus Sire Stakes Ireland Races @ Portmarnock Raceway

Happy 30th Birthday Tir Prince



The late Mr Billy Williams was a travelling showman who's father also Billy brought the first giant Wheels to The UK. The family originated from greater Manchester but young Billy suffered from a bad chest so in the 1950's they decided to relocate to the seaside town of Rhyl and continue their fun fair and amusement operations on the North Wales Coast.

These were the halcyon days for Sunny Rhyl with people flocking to the town by trains and buses from all over the UK to enjoy their annual holidays. Areas would have their own designated weeks the likes of Potters Week and Scotch Week ensuring that the town remained jam packed throughout the summer months.

The Williams family built The Downtown Night Club with a casino

beneath and also continued to travel the country with their fairground rides.

Somewhere amongst all this as a young man Billy Williams attended Prestatyn Raceway which was a half mile harness racing track built and owned by The New Zealand Night Time Trotting Club. Billy ended up swapping his car for a horse and needless to say had fallen in love with the sport!

It was to be a love affair that lasted until his passing in 2002 and during that time he did everything that he could for the sport of harness racing. The culmination of his dreams was when he managed to secure a piece of marsh waste land by the bottom of Towyn Bridge and proceeded to build the finest harness racing track that has been seen in The UK, Tir Prince Raceway was born!

The track was scheduled to open at



Easter in 1990 but the sea defences in Towyn failed in February of the same year and the track was washed away with the site being under 6 foot of water. Undeterred Billy and his team worked day and night to ensure that the track was ready and open for May 1990. Make no mistake though the flood did have an effect on Tir Prince as both the Bar and the grandstand were scheduled to be a lot grander than what we ended up with but the additional costs incurred by the flooding meant that these plans had to be scaled down.

Billy Williams vision was to have a barn full of horses and to be able to race twice per week with off course betting. He also managed over time to secure his own Tote to allow punters to have a flutter. There were some wonderful times with a packed 60 foot long bar being drunk dry after racing by people from all over the UK and Ireland.

Billy Williams was ahead of his time and one can only wonder where the sport of harness racing would have

been if the internet had been in full swing at the time that Tir Prince opened in 1990. Particular high points for the track during this time were securing the Rasus coverage with S4C which lasted for well over a decade and everyone all remembers how busy it was when the Water Rats and all the celebrity's came to Tir Prince Raceway. The jockeys races were also major highlights. Billy tried initiatives with both French and Swedish Trotters and was willing to do almost anything to help the sport that he loved succeed.

The racing was and still is great however it became apparent that harness racing alone doesn't pay the bills so the Tir Prince site was gradually transformed with a fairground being placed on the front and a market and car boot sale being operated on the grounds to help keep the site going. These changes were vital to the raceway remaining in existence and are still just as important today.

We had grand plans for a birthday

celebration in May this year but unfortunately COVID 19 and the lockdown put paid to this and at one time it looked very doubtful as to whether we would get racing away at all but in true Tir Prince style we have found a way to overcome the odds and get the racing on.

The track is no stranger to crisis as mentioned it was flooded 2 months before its grand opening and has had a main water board sewer underneath the track by the paddock bend burst twice over the years meaning that no racing could go ahead in those seasons. The loss of Billy Williams the tracks founder was a mammoth blow both to Tir Prince Raceway and the sport of harness racing.

That brings me on to the tracks current owner Mr Adam Williams who has now ran Tir Prince Raceway for longer than his late father did. Make no mistake Adam is a different person from his father so far as the horses are concerned as he does not own train or race standardbreds and never will do. Despite this fact he still enjoys the sport and pours thousands of pounds of his own money in to added prize money every year and enjoys

putting on the show and still harbours hopes that at some point in the future the sport will become a mainstream sport in the bookmakers and that money can be secured and brought in to the sport from off track betting.

Having grown up watching his father be frustrated with peoples inability to work together to move the sport forwards it saddens him to hear the same old problems holding the sport back decades later. However the track remains and Tir Prince Raceway remains committed to putting on top class harness racing on the only eight horse on the gate floodlit facility in The UK and Ireland and it remains of great pride to us when people from all over the world acknowledge Tir Prince as a world class standard track.

Rest assured if and when the proper opportunity arises for the sport of harness racing Tir Prince Raceway will do all it can to ensure that the opportunity is seized upon with both hands.

Here's to the next thirty years.

Eric Witherspoon
Business Manager



SHRC AND BHRC TEAM EFFORT PAVES THE WAY FOR RACING AT CORBIEWOOD DESPITE ALL THE CHALLENGES!

Scottish racing has faced many different challenges in 2020, with yet again the news that the future of Corbiewood is in jeopardy.

As if this and Covid-19 was not enough to deal with, things were put quickly into perspective with the car accident sustained by SHRC Chairman Ian Dawson, and our thoughts go to him and his family as we wish him a speedy recovery.

Following a delayed start to the Scottish Racing season due to Covid 19 lockdown restrictions, racing finally resumed at Corbiewood on 2nd August 2020 with a 5 race card. However, this was a case of it's on, no it's off, no it's back on again.

The SHRC committee, together with the BHRC had an almighty struggle to gain the appropriate permissions from local government and Scottish Government resulting in a multi agency zoom meeting with representatives from Stirling

Council, Police Scotland, Jim McInally and Craig Stevenson representing the BHRC and Cathy Shields and Karen Kennedy on behalf of SHRC.

We put our case forward well enough to be granted permission at local government level and this was followed up the next day with a meeting at Corbiewood with Cathy, Karen and a representative from Stirling Council's Environmental Health Dept.

Due to the very stringent Covid restrictions in Scotland we then had to gain approval of Scottish Government which we was duly granted on 31st July.

We hope to continue racing behind closed doors in the meantime entries depending (please support us by entering your horses), in the hope the situation changes and we can then welcome the public back to racing in Scotland.

We would like to thank everyone for the co operation and support we have been given so far during these challenging times.

Cathy Shields
(Acting SHRC Chairperson)

DAN CARLIN

THE IRISH FIELD

2020 marks my fifth full year contributing on the subject of harness racing to The Irish Field (est 1870) of Dublin. The paper is one of the great equine publications of the world and it is a sign of acceptance that they carry harness racing.

In the late seventies and early eighties a staff reporter Dave Baker covered Portmarnock for 'The Field'. Later a young Thomas Bennett - a font of knowledge on harness racing, covered the sport in the paper. For various

reasons the coverage ceased until 2016.

There is a nice story to how trotting got back into The Irish Field. Shortly after John Richardson's father Hughie passed away in Dublin while his countrymen were attending Tregaron 2015, I felt it would be appropriate to submit an obituary on the founding father of Irish harness racing.

Early in the next year I said to my contact 'You carried that obituary - how's about you carry some race reports?' The editor allowed me a four week trial and the first piece was an eighth of a page! The first article in 2016 was about how Newtown Rock had obviously trained on from two to three. I hope the article didn't jinx 'The Rock'.

Five years later harness racing usually gets a full page and once or twice a year,



at a big event, we might get a double page spread. Tim Kelleher helps with the Cork scene. The eighth of a page didn't eat into my time as much!

The editorial team have been very supportive to me and our 'minority sport'. In return I tell them that the harness page gives them something different from other horsey publications. The team at The Irish Field are very complimentary about the photography of Nadina Ironia. Nadina is world class at her job, in my opinion.

Old Hughie had more wise sayings than Chairman Mao. I'm sure up at the race track in the sky he is smiling that out of a sad event came so much positive coverage.

I try to write to attract non-harness people to follow the progress of the Kanes, Kavanaghs, Murphys and Murdocks. We share the same feed merchants, farriers and equine dentists with the thoroughbred and jumping world. It must be a nice feeling to call in for four bags of racehorse mix and be told "That was a nice double you had last week".

From my own point of view I drove and trained with limited success for 20 years. In 2000 I took up on-course bookmaking following the death of my father. I hope that my 'feel' for driving or the insights that being a bookie can give, come across in the writing.

I have a big problem. If I am passing a track and there are two green horses

struggling to get round in 2.35, I'll find something to like about one of them, maybe even both. It's called an addiction.

I was 20 years 'off them' and went back. Yes, in late 2015 I bought a Brywins mare that didn't make the races, wintered her and the following year sent her to Kikicolts.

The ensuing foal (Castlewood Glensman) now three has established that he has a talent for eating copious amounts of the dearest type of feed and for picking up freak accidents. At time of going to press he has yet to grace the winners circle, being prone to novicey breaks. "If we get him sorted out he's a real one" - a mantra repeated from Ammanford to Australia. Hope is what fills the race card.

Darren has asked me to give an update on the Irish scene. I cheated by simply looking out my archive of 2020 Irish Fields. The guy who writes this stuff is brilliant! Here's a few highlights;

Back in February I covered the Prix d' Amerique in the paper. I was delighted when the Coleraine Chronical also carried a short piece that I submitted about local bread man Nigel Quigley's useful performance in the Amateur Drivers Championship at the famous meeting.

Also in the early part of the year we got to follow young Jonny Cowden's adventures in New Zealand where he drove successfully.

Most of the top stables were featured in the 'five to follow' pre-season series with the horsemen generous with their time and insightful with the comments.

The COVID crisis allowed me the luxury of writing some nostalgic pieces. Ian Pimlott can recall the heady days of Prestatyn and the heyday of the Manchester track.

The Irish Field gave entire pages to John Campbell and Delvin Miller of the USA. Both men were noted for their helpful attitude to young people, both are good role models for upcoming drivers.

I was personally fascinated by the story of a Captain Kölln, an eccentric German – based in Ireland, who bred some of JS Jones' foundation mares. In fact, this family have given the world Evenwood Sonofagun.

In June an interview with Bill Donovan of Florida, owner and major sponsor, showed how a college job as a groom led to a lifelong interest in harness racing.

Also in June Mark Flanagan chairman of the IHRA rode the tackles well when he was pressed about all the hot topics in the sport. In that issue the editorial of the paper admonished the Irish government for overlooking the harness sector by comparison with the thoroughbred sector. Well said that man, Leo Powell.

By early July we finally had actual racing

to cover. Buster Gilligan got the first racing headline of the year, and has been in super form all season.

First time winners, father and son doubles, some nice performances from Gavin Murdock all filled pages. Any wins by the man who never ages, Alan Wallace senior are met with much teasing. Alan is convinced he is in the top three in the world, not just Ireland.

On the 15th August we ran a two page spread to launch the Red John Festival. I used a few column inches to prove yet again that I could not tip the winner of a walk over.

The Irish Field is not widely available in the UK. I assume it could be requested at a proper newsagents. However, it is simple to subscribe online and the paper gives subscribers ' five free articles ' as a taster. Thereafter it is a chargeable service. Check out The Irish Field website to register. The paper also has top quality information on flat and NH racing both Irish and British and educational columns on breeding and horse care etc. From time to time I try to cover UK harness racing - especially when an Irish raider beats 'the old enemy'.

In fairness, the BHRC do publicise my pieces on their Facebook page. Like and share my work please, this is how modern papers monitor the 'reach' of their publication.

One point in conclusion. I am delighted

to see some fresh blood at the top of the BHRC. Neither Ireland or Britain is strong enough in trotting terms to 'be an island'. There needs to be a strong working relationship between neighbours as there is between New Zealand and Australia or France and Belgium.

My mother took me trotting when I was 18 months old - so that's 50 years of racing I have seen, admittedly you are a teenager before you start to take it in properly.

In that time I have seen brilliant people trying to run harness racing but many more people who looked out of their depth. I have good faith in the current

management of the IHRA and it pains me to see British trotting people commenting on the Irish scene when they have, in my opinion only one side of the story.

The current IHRA are not perfect, nor is the BHRC but I believe that the two bodies have younger men at the top now who have proven themselves in the world of business, broadcasting and people management.

DAN CARLIN

THE IRISH FIELD

MYSTERY CORNER

In our June edition we ran a competition for our junior members. Well done to Stephen Lees Jnr, who was our winner.



You win a £5 harness voucher, lucky Reggie!! See page 54 for our September Mystery Corner.

JOHN DUGGAN

It's with great sadness and regret that we have to inform all who knew John Duggan that he recently lost his battle with cancer. He was a great friend to many and will be sadly missed.

John was passionate about the sport of harness racing and was a top owner and breeder in his day. His 'DUGGAN' prefix was well known throughout the harness racing community, he was a genuine horse lover who he also dabbled with BHA but his true real love was harness racing.

The BHRC would like to offer their sincere condolences to his family. From the family of the sport he loved, goodbye John, may you rest in peace.

Mystery Corner

Harness Racing Wordsearch

G N I N I A K T E W I X H C T A W P O T S F P U W
 O L I H P H N Y Z R R F E A M M A N V A L L E Y O
 Y E A R L I N G L A E D N R U D R A C E C A R H K
 I D S J J L G Z L C V L I A J F P H V N C Y V Y W
 V X E A P M K V A I I E A C E L H E M S B W V E D
 I R O R D E R E H N R I T T C K C A R T S S A R G
 N O A X B D J M E G D F I R N W R D L Y B P B C O
 G T B T K D L Q K W G I R A I N R C A K P B I D X
 T A R R H A R E I B L L B T R O O O M C D P N I U
 O T O A S O L A P F U L T S P I N L P O Y D C H K
 N N U I L U P M D A A E O K R L G L E D W E H G V
 U E G N E C V P E N D H R Q I L N A T D A E E R Q
 V M H E E V A S L L A G T I T A O R E A R F S U D
 X M G R H A T X Z E Y T A D Z T L T R P W E T B L
 J O D J W A O I B I S J S Q X S I R U O S N E L E
 B C Q G B B L V N O T P M A H R E V L O W G R E I
 W S D L E I F H G U A H K A J P F S B C E I S S F
 Z V E S U H L S D E M T R B O H I O Y R A E W S S
 O V R A F N I C P L R D L R A N O E S H O T Y U L
 S O T H B V A O H O T I D R G K S B Q B X S K M L
 H P U B Q N H W T R N A N H M N L K Y Q X E L W E
 O I P P N N L T A K E E A A L R E C A P H R U Y B
 E H H O A A E C E L S M K I V E V N C Q L P S O R
 S W C T O R K R E S K E K C A R L I S L E R S R K
 I K S F Q B S M J D R U F C O R B I E W O O D K T

BOOKMAKER

STOPWATCH

FEED

TRAINING

HARDTRACK

GRASSTRACK

WOLVERHAMPTON

TROTBRITAIN

STALLION

YEARLING

FOAL

STABLE

ALMELY

BELLSFIELD

TIRPRINCE

TROTTER

WOLSINGHAM

AMMANVALLEY

BHRC

CARLISLE

DRIVER

HAUGHFIELD

HELLIFIELD

NINGTON

LEADROPE

PIKEHALL

RACING

STANDARD BRED

BLINKERS

CANNOCK

CORBIWOOD

HARNESS

HORSEBOX

LAMPETER

MUSSELBURGH

PADDOCK

RACECARD

SHOES

STARTCAR

TRAINER

WHEELS

YORK

BINCHESTER

BROUGH

COMMENTATOR

HEADCOLLAR

HOPPLES

KILNSEY

LONGNOR

PACER

PRESTEIGNE

SADDLEPAD

STANHOPE

SULKY

WHIP

Over 16's coffee time fun, under 16's email me a picture to be in with a chance of winning a prize: Julie.park4@gmail.com

Thank you Karen Valentine for providing the September 'Mystery Corner'

And just to make you smile

We are all used to seeing Walter in the winners enclosure, most of us who use social media are used to the excellent service that Carmel provides with results from across the UK and Ireland. We are used to the stunning scenery from the images of Walter training on the beach (the backdrop that is of course).

However during lockdown what many of us don't know is that Walter hit a problem with his training. One that he didn't share this time on social media, but some stranger did, in fact one I stumbled across quite by accident when Walter became a social media star.

Imagine my amazement when I saw somebody jogging a horse round and round the inside of a roundabout, I was amazed when I zoomed in, and yes you've guessed, it was Walter.

When I spoke to Carmel she explained they were not allowed on the beach because of covid-19 restrictions and travelling so he was improvising.

Well Walter your improvising seems to have worked judging by your trips to the winners enclosure!

Photos courtesy of Jimmy Cooke and Carmel Stewart

The warm up



Before the cool down



and the chill out



practising on grass?





CAMDEN EQUESTRIAN CENTRE HOME OF THE CAMDEN STUD

**York Standardbred Sale
17th October at 10am**

Entry forms on Facebook page, BHRC website or from track
All proceeds will be put back into the sport

**Followed by racing featuring:
Daniel Welling Memorial
& George Button Snr Memorial Trot**

