

# EDITORIAL

“Little boxes, on a hillside  
And they’re all made out of  
ticky tacky  
Little boxes, little boxes  
And they all look just the  
same”

Oh, the joys of spring. As I write this in early April the old “currant bun” has been seen from time to time but with a wicked north east wind determined to cut you in two. Winter has not released it’s icy grip in these parts and you can still find enough snow round our track to have a snowball fight. The horse I’m training has after a disappointing start, decided to go better, I live in hope. But when I come off the track I cannot feel my hands and look like Bibendum on account of all the different insulating clothes I’m wrapped up in. Is it all worth it? Its hard to get good horses (this horse would have been a decent race horse 20 years ago), feed and diesel cost the earth, prize money is low. Why bother? Why not take up Ballroom Dancing? And then I think of the lines of the above song. An iconic part of the 1960’s music scene it bemoans the banality of middle class American life. “Drink their Martini’s, dry” etc. Life might be comfortable but by God it’s boring. Our lives might not be comfortable but they

are never boring! Whether foaling mares, breaking yearlings in, buying or selling, training, planning race campaigns or going to watch young horses train with trainers, it isn’t boring. The development of human life is characterised by triumph over adversity. Be thankful...it’s still better than golf and drinking your Martini, dry!

Another feature of spring-time in the BHRC is the constant issue of late entries, to races and now our Sire Stakes programme. We try to accommodate and if an entry or application is posted before the due date but received after it and there is proof of in time posting, the entry/application is accepted. Something due on the 1<sup>st</sup> April but received in an envelope clearly post marked 2<sup>nd</sup> April renders that entry invalid. As advised many times, get your stuff off in time, send it recorded delivery or at least get a certificate of posting. Cheap insurance if you ask me! A common retort is “why should I?” (send it recorded). Why try and make life easy? However should we accept a late entry what are the consequences? Our rules are based in the Law of Contract. The acceptance

of a late entry would render it invalid and be a breach of contract. Should that horse win, the owners of beaten horses could quite properly object and hold the BHRC to account. That’s a noose I don’t want to put the BHRC’s head in.

Our database, developed over a number of years by the dint of hard work and purchase of expertise to assist, is an awesomely powerful tool. It is as yet under utilised but ready for extension of it’s functionality when needed. Despite all the wonderful things it can do it can’t right the wrongs of incorrect data. To that end we are constantly battling with Irish data. The Irish aided by “she who drank at the fountain of eternal youth” Mrs Bernadette Kelly (buy some Cam Ocean Salve from her by the way) do their level best to send us the best information they have. But it ain’t always right and it causes horrendous problems. Try visiting the office in the few days before one of our elite meetings such as Appleby, Ceredigion or Musselburgh and the girls are tearing their hair out trying to reconcile issues regarding Irish entries. Thank God this will change. Our friends in the Emerald Isle are embracing our database to ensure smooth operation and homogeneity of information collection and storage. This is a major step forward and will facilitate

reciprocity of racing (the ferries go both ways and why can't we raid the Irish for a change?).

One matter we must all address is the planned race meeting at Wolverhampton on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> August. Shane Fletcher has dug deep to finance this. Jackie Maguire has sweat blood to get this going. The venue for the ultra successful William Hill British Pacing Championship, this is not just a meeting but an exhibition to the gambling world that we can and do put on excellent racing worthy of inclusion in their product list. We must have good horses there, not for what they can win but for what they can do for our

sport. Enough said.

There is some very good news on the horizon in Scotland, not only the proposed meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> August at Hawick but the very firm suggestion that eight notional Corbieewood dates are transferred to Haugh Field. This is very good news and in all the uncertainty that surrounds the sport in Scotland I think that Hamish Muirhead, the Haugh Field, Corbieewood and Scottish Harness Racing Club Committees should all be congratulated.. What happens in Scotland long term is anybody's guess, everyone is in the dire situation of not knowing. But these very bold and encouraging

moves will ensure survival.

So it's back to the training and working and hoping. Some of you may wish to take up Ballroom Dancing. I commend it to you. John Ripley has the footwear for it. Of course I don't want to allude that some of you are past it. But as the Bard put it, in Romeo and Juliet: Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet, For you and I are past our dancing days

Thank God he wasn't talking about Mick Welling and me! (Welling is older than me and had a hard paper round as a kid).

*Gordon Garnett*

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