

Cheltenham Festival News



Mercurial glory for Ramsay

Hats off to Will Ramsay (MFW/RF 1987) who owned, trained and rode Mr Mercurial to victory at Musselburgh early last month. If conditions dry out, Ramsay tells us that the plan is to head to Cheltenham next week for the Foxhunters. If its too soft Aintree may be more on the radar. Good luck Will!



Henry Daly will be hoping Honest Vic is on his best behaviour in the Coral Cup

Honest chance for Vic and Pilkingtons in Coral Cup

Richard Pilkington (JF 1982) and his father Sir Thomas Pilkington (AKW 1951) are looking forward to seeing the Henry Daly-trained Honest Vic potentially take his chance in the Coral Cup next Wednesday. Richard reports that 'whilst he has taken his time to get going (this was mainly caused by ulcers that have required a great deal of veterinary work...) he has won twice this year and if he gets into the race he might have a chance of coming 4th at 40/1!' He also reports that he has become known as "dis"Honest Vic in some circles due to some of his more belligerent racing antics in the past including jumping through the wing at Kempton when coming to lay down a big challenge!.....



Sleepy heading to the Champion Hurdle

Hughie Morrison reports Not So Sleepy in grand form ahead of a potential tilt at next week's Champion Hurdle. "Lots of rain and you never know", he says about the 40/1 shot. Morrison also intends to send Third Wind to the Pertemps who is improving all the time since winning at Wincanton. Looking further ahead to the flat season and Telecaster is back in training and may start off at Sandown in April.



Rapper heads to the Pertemps for Butler, Wiggin and Arkwright

Rapper with jockey Richard Johnson and a happy bunch of owners

Humphrey Butler (JSBP '75) has been in touch to tell us that he and his fellow owners intend to run Rapper in next week's Pertemps Final. Here he is pictured on the left with Charlie Arkwright (ORSB '78) in the middle and Mark Wiggin (JF '80) on the right at Ludlow last year. Having won once as a novice, he's since won a decent 3m handicap at Market Rasen and then finished second at Cheltenham on New Years Day behind the well-touted Skandiburg of Olly Murphy's. Butler reports that they head to Cheltenham on Thursday off a mark of 136 with hopes high and insulted that 33/1 is still available! Richard Johnson still has to be persuaded but here's hoping!



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NEWSLETTER



Wargrave and jockey Dennis Schiergen (quartered silks on rails) on their way to victory in St Moritz

Champagne on Ice for Baker

Galileo broke new ground - or ice - as his son Wargrave landed the 81st Grosser Preis von St Moritz on Sunday, the most prestigious event of the White Turf meeting which takes place on the frozen lake at St Moritz each spring. Trained by George Baker (CNG 1983), he broke smartly from the stalls and led rounding the home turn before staying on well to win by two lengths. Wargrave raced 12 times for his previous trainer Fozzy Stack and showed his best form at three when opening his account by two and a half lengths in a Naas maiden and when second in the Listed Edmund and Josie Whelan Memorial Stakes at the Listowel harvest festival. He caught the eye of George Baker at the Tattersalls Autumn Horses in Training Sale last October, when the Surrey trainer snapped him up for 100,000gns. Baker described him in his blog as a 'dude of a horse'. "The cunning plan was executed superbly by the team and I could not be prouder of them", he continued. And hopefully we have a very talented horse to run in some of the bigger handicaps in the months ahead. Emulating (Belgian) Bill in the Hunt Cup? I'm getting a little ahead of myself."



Doble celebrates 60 years in saddle

John Doble (OVO and College '59) was until last month regularly riding work for Charlie Longsdon and David Pipe. Richard Wilkin ((TAB/GRStA/1962) has been in touch to highlight that John is celebrating 60 years active involvement in racing. An interest that covers early point-to-pointing days as an undergraduate, a greatly enthusiastic owner and still ever optimistic in often dire racing circumstances.

The image shows co-owner 78-year-old John with 17-year-old amateur Fergus Gillard along with Huccaby having just flogged it around Warwick.



Brooke to become Queen's representative at Ascot

Sir Francis Brooke will become the sixth person to hold the position of representative during her reign

Sir Francis Brooke (CNCA/MCM 1981) will replace Johnny Weatherby as the Queen's representative at Ascot after the royal meeting in June. Brooke succeeded Weatherby as chairman of parent company Ascot Authority (Holdings) Ltd two years ago and has been a trustee at the course since 2011. He will become the sixth person to hold the position of representative during the Queen's reign. Brooke said: "Johnny has made an immense contribution to Ascot since his appointment as a trustee in 1997." "He was chairman of the board from 2008 to 2018 and succeeded the Duke of Devonshire as Her Majesty's representative at Ascot in 2011. Johnny's total commitment to Ascot racecourse and its success has been evident to all who know him. It's a great honour to be asked to succeed him as Her Majesty's representative."