

Pharly Green leads at Plumpton



Sizing up Pharly Green

Events have conspired against Pharly Green - she led on her racecourse debut only to quickly drop out of contention (we later found this was due to a lung infection). On her second start she collided with the running rail and unseated her jockey and on her next run last month it wasn't a case of third time lucky - because when lying in a handy position she was the meat in a sandwich and was nearly brought down. On her most recent visit to Fontwell the

ground was much faster and jockey Joe Tizzard said that when the leaders upped the tempo she just couldn't go with them. So the jury is now out and contemplating what or where next. The reality is Pharly Green is very small which puts her at a big disadvantage taking on much bigger horses at level weights. So we may just give her a chance on the all weather when she'll be carrying nearly 2 stone less and see if this makes a difference.



Snapshot

Hedge cutting at the end of February. Hedges are ideal for horses providing much needed shelter - so we look after them well!

WINNING P ST

THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER FROM HOMEBRED RACING

SPRING/2008

Homebred's 2-year-old filly Polarity has now started roadwork with Sheena Hill



First steps to the racecourse

This is Homebred's latest recruit Polarity - a 2 year old bay filly by Group 1 winner Hamas out of our winning miler Snowy Mantle. Sam is now broken and will be ridden away by the end of March. The plan is then to

get her home for the spring grass. Sam is a big, powerful filly who looks likely to need some time to strengthen into her frame. Her sire Hamas was an easy winner of the Group 1 July Cup over 7 furlongs and her dam Snowy

Mantle won over a mile. Shares are still available to existing Homebred Owners at a special discount (without VAT = 17.5%) until July 1st. Please call the office on 01293 884433 or apply online at: www.homebredracing.co.uk

2008 Owners Day Sunday 20th July



This year's open day at the Homebred Stud in West Wales will be Sunday 20th July. It's an informal day which provides an opportunity to meet other owners and all those that help behind the scenes - as well as a chance to see our mares, youngsters and those now retired.

Course Factfile: Cheltenham

Prestbury Park, Cheltenham.

Location: Birmingham 51, Bristol 155 and London 105 miles

Telephone: 01242 513014

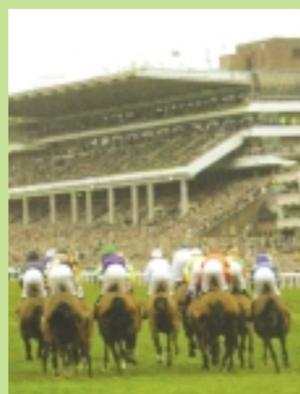
Website: www.cheltenham.co.uk

Cheltenham is Britain's premier National Hunt track, located in spectacular Cotswold surroundings and famed for its National Hunt Festival, now the jewel in the crown of Channel 4's jumps coverage. There are three left-handed courses at Prestbury Park: the Old Course, the New Course

(similar to the Old but using separate ground for most of the circuit, and mainly distinguishable from the Old by having two fences from the home turn rather than one) and the Park Course, which does not require the runners to go to the top of the very demanding hill at the far end of the track. Cheltenham places a great premium on stamina as well as jumping ability, and the steep uphill climb to the winning post after the final obstacle has changed the complexion of many a race.

Major races: Gold Cup, Champion Hurdle, Queen Mother Champions' Chase, Triumph Hurdle, Sun Alliance Chase, Mackeson Gold Cup, Tripleprint Gold Cup, Bula Hurdle.

Celebrations: **The Queens Arms** at Ashleworth (west of Cheltenham) is consistently good for food (01452) 700395 whilst **Five Mile House** at Duntisbourne Abbots, in an imposing building, offers a good selection of food for those travelling east (01285) 821432



Father Superior...

Gran Clicquot's first foal (see page 1) is by Royal Ascot and Group winner Superior Premium who stands at Throckmorton Stud in Worcestershire.



Group winning sprinter Superior Premium

We chose him because he reinforces the speed element in our mare's pedigree and is also not over big for producing a first foal. Superior Premium proved himself tough, as well as classy, winning 11 races

Did you know?

There are 59 racecourses in Britain of which 17 stage only flat racing, 24 only jumping and 18 race under both codes.

between 5 - 6 furlongs. Gran Clicquot loved racing 'on top of the ground' and so as a 7 - 8 furlong performer herself we hope that her first foal will prove to be a speedy type.

Let us have your ideas and views



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Did you know?

By 18 months of age a young horse will have nearly reached its full height but only four-fifths of its mature weight.

Snapshot

Homebred's latest arrival a filly by Superior Premium out of 3 times flat winner Gran Clicquot

Shown here at just a few hours old this very striking filly foal arrived at the Homebred Stud in the early hours of 25 March



On a winner?

Although it's been a very trying time with many yards suffering from bugs and our own horses disappointing, at least Inside Track, our free online tipping service, has been finding winners. In fact £10 staked each way on every selection since we started in June 2004 has produced a profit in every quarter - except two. Overall winnings are currently over £3000 ahead. This is all really for fun rather than serious gambling so we concentrate on finding decent each way prices and some much longer shots too. Hopefully these will include our own when they rediscover their form. Ex jockey Brian Parry, who now runs Longstone Stud in Newmarket, says "Your filly Divine White must be the best handicapped filly in the country!" Let's hope she can prove it!



Divine White

Snapshot

Tree surgeon Chris Owen demonstrates a good head for heights trimming branches overhanging the Homebred stables!



Another fine mess!

After the Kieren Fallon fiasco the BHA has taken the unprecedented step of making a public apology to Homebred trainer Stewart Parr when announcing no further action would be taken over supposedly suspicious betting surrounding the running of Black Oval at Wolverhampton well over a year ago.

While welcoming the news, Stewart says that having the affair hanging over his head for so long has damaged his reputation.

"Every time someone sees me they think - there's the man that stopped Black Oval. But I didn't, and I am adamant I have done nothing untoward".

Appeals were lodged by both Parr, who was fined £5,000 under the non-trier rule by the Dunstall Park stewards, and jockey Dean Mernagh, who was given a 28 day ban.

Black Oval, a drifter from 7-2 to 9-1, was restrained some way off the pace in the 7f handicap won by Kahlua Bear in January 2007 before making headway under apparently tender riding from the home turn to finish a never-dangerous third.

The following day the BHA revealed that betting concerns raised shortly before the race had prompted the investigation. There is no telling how long the BHA's security department will take to complete probes of this type - betting related inquiries dating back to March and April 2006, remain unresolved - but in this case the regulatory body clearly felt Parr should have learned his fate earlier.

A BHA spokesman said "It is frustrating for all concerned that this matter has taken so long to resolve. We would have been able to conclude this matter far earlier had we received Dean Mernagh's phone records sooner, although we accept this was not entirely his fault, and we apologise to Stewart Parr for having to suffer this delay through no fault of his own".

"As well as attracting the attention of the stewards, the race also attracted the attention of our betting analyst, the media, and the betting public. Given all that, it

Stewart Parr with Homebred's Keep a Welcome



was absolutely right that we investigate it, and the end result is that Stewart Parr and Dean Mernagh are exonerated of any wrongdoing over and above the findings of the Wolverhampton stewards, which they have already appealed".

In response, Parr, who has a string of ten horses at his Nottinghamshire base said: "It is nice of them to apologise, but my appeal is still pending and the whole thing is ridiculous. I don't know anything about the betting and I haven't done anything wrong".

Black Oval had managed just one victory in 58 starts when attracting the attention of the Wolverhampton stewards in a race in which trainer Stewart Parr and jockey Dean Mernagh decided beforehand she would not be hit with the whip.

Homebred owners and anyone who follows racing will have been well aware of his mare's quirky ways which have been highlighted by consistently being in the frame for Stewart after showing nothing for others.

Stewart's transformation of Black Oval's form figures to 242243 from her last six runs, in stark contrast to her 50 previous efforts for other trainers had all been achieved through patience and kindness. Described by Stewart as 'an absolute nightmare to train' she obviously produces her best

when left alone and the last thing connections wanted is this much improved record wrecked through resorting to brute force. If shown the whip she'd never have finished as close as she did.

But these are factors which seem to have escaped the notice of the Wolverhampton stewards who have earned themselves a reputation for their zeal in applying the non-triers rule to runners who have to be held up. Owners will recall our own Homebred Star was victim of a ludicrous enquiry under the same rule when fast finishing into a place on the same track.

Hold up horses are notoriously difficult to win with because every factor has to fall right - and when they don't it can look embarrassing - but that's far from not trying. Since Stewart doesn't bet, and as a new trainer needs winners, the stewards need to answer the question: Why on earth wouldn't Black Oval be trying? And the answer to why she drifted in the betting could simply be that the owners were away on holiday and that being favourite in betting forecasts was just unrealistic. The Wolverhampton stewards need to think about the obvious before imagining the worst - and this has all the hallmarks of another case where they've clearly got it badly wrong.

Polarity put through her paces

These photos show our 2-year-old filly being lunged by Sheena Hill



Mickey on Football Crazy

Reproduced from a recent article in the Daily Mail

Mickey Bowen is celebrating his first winner as a racehorse trainer ...at the tender age of 12. Schoolboy Bowen is counting his winnings after Football Crazy, the horse he calls his own, won for the first time for three years at Wetherby.

The boy was so nervous before the race that he was sent home at lunchtime from school in west Wales with stomach ache.

He arrived at his family's stables at Little Newcastle, west Wales, just in time to cheer home 14-1 shot Football Crazy on television.

Officially the horse is in the care of his father Peter Bowen, a leading jumps trainer. But he prefers to give all the credit to his son. "Mickey wants to be a trainer too, so I told him this autumn that he could start early by learning with Football Crazy, who used to be decent," said Bowen senior. "He spends hours with the horse and deserves all the plaudits for steadily bringing

him back to form after 15 months off." Mickey Bowen is up at 5.30 each morning to ride Football Crazy on the gallops before catching the bus to school in Fishguard. Once classwork is over he rushes home and goes straight into the stableyard to brush his horse over for an hour each evening. Yesterday he was still buzzing from the success of Football Crazy as he led up Always Waining for his father in the paddock before the big race at Newbury. "The horse is as good as gold on the gallops with me and never tries to run away," he said. "We are learning together and sometimes my 10-year-old brother Sean rides him, too. With any luck he will win again." That could well prove expensive for Peter Bowen, who added: "As Mickey has been doing all the training with the horse, he wants all the prizemoney - not just my winning percentage!" Football Crazy is owned by the boy's mother, Karen, who said: "As he's put in the work on this horse I'll be setting the money aside to buy another one for him and his two brothers."

Racing's authorities are letting us down...

Government statistics suggest that the equine industry is now the UK's sixth biggest with racing, its flagship, currently employing over 100,000. The BHA's own figures show that ownership increased by 13.8% in the last year - a growth in new customer footfall only matched by Tesco. But it's doubtful that Tesco is considering a 40% cutback in car parking to reduce numbers in store! So the suggestion by racing's regulators of a 40% cutback in the programme is a shocking admission of decades of failure. Such a drastic suggestion masks the basic issues from an inability to secure funding to not recruiting enough jockeys to go around. We're told dwindling prizemoney being chased by too many horses is the problem - but why then do an increasing number of owners wish to become involved? And why is point-to-pointing, where costs are only nominally less, continuing to boom when owners are chasing prizes worth less than the diesel for the horsebox to get there? Just like the music industry, racing attracts many wannabees

with a few at the top making it whilst the rest of us are chasing the dream. It's the dream that's racing's attraction. The theory, we're told, is that racing shouldn't be catering for 'bad' horses. But no one intends to own or breed a poor horse - and a large proportion of even the bluest blooded fail to win, whilst many obscurely bred animals become racing legends. Even the biggest cutbacks will fail to remove the no-hopers who represent the nearly 40% of all racehorses who never win any prizemoney at all. Some trainers at the top of the tree are very vocal in not wishing to train moderate horses. But they're speaking from a privileged position and simply don't want to see 'their' prizemoney spread too thinly outside their own theatre of operation. It's likely there's more skill shown by trainers who are happy to graft to convert 45 rated horses to 50+. And there are plenty of jockeys, vets, farriers and many others who owe a living to these lesser performers. The reality is that 'better' and 'moderate' races are equally competitive. It's galling that British breeders have

not escaped the blame of overproduction despite UK foal numbers actually remaining static over recent years. Imports are the problem suggesting that those whose job it is to promote the British Thoroughbred might have done better. Surprisingly this criticism is also echoed by prominent stallion owners, who have been urged by breeders for years to reduce their books of mares, but who've simply compounded the problem by also shutting their stallions to the southern hemisphere so further reducing the gene pool. During these decades of decline racing has failed to secure proper funding, or to buy the Tote, whilst frittering away prodigious amounts in failed legal battles in pursuit of 'protecting racing's integrity'. But its regulators continue to preside over a system that not only promotes vested interest but actually encourages cynical cheating at every track up and down the country every day when horses are knowingly run over unsuitable trips, courses and going to achieve artificially low handicap marks. And when

a horse of 80+ ability wins a 0-65 we all applaud the trainer's skill! This uncompetitive scenario is doing racing no favours at all. What other competitive activity actually encourages poor performance? Similarly, our 'top' race The Derby is no guarantee of producing the best of a generation - the winner simply has enjoyed the privilege of being entered as a foal - it's like putting little Johnny down for Eton in the expectation of delivering Olympic Gold! The rest of the world has moved on to become a competitive meritocracy - but not racing. It's time for a root and branch change: Runners should need to qualify by good performance to get out of maidens and trials for

big races should be exactly that - so only the best end up in the best races. Then we'd have real champions. More prizemoney? It's important for trainers and jockeys - and would be nice for owners too. With so many new owners applying why not make a big increase in race entry fees (they'd still pale into insignificance compared to other costs of racehorse ownership). This could provide more prizemoney and reduce the problem of multiple entries. Introduce competition between racecourses too - the Breeders Cup proves that switching venues works and racecourses should be made to bid for prestige races to further increase funds. With racing in such a poor state can we still afford the authorities to have plush London offices whilst Weatherbys demonstrate that day to day running can easily be administered from a light industrial estate in the provinces? Rather than reducing opportunities at the lower end for the owners who fund racing, the axe needs to be wielded at the very top!

Did you know?
The number of professional jockeys has halved over the past 20 years - from nearly 1000 to around 450 today.