

A FAMILY AFFAIR

★ OWEN FAMILY SETS PACE IN FIVE-TO-FOLLOW - PAGE 2



TOM TALKS

RACING POST INTERVIEW

★ YOUR CHANCE TO CATCH UP WITH ALASTAIR DOWN'S NO-HOLDS-BARRED MEETING WITH THE BOSS - PAGE 2



Manor House Monthly

Issue No.41
August 2014

Cheworee, far left, finishing second at Glorious Goodwood



Magazine in visit to MHS

THE latest edition of *Horse & Hound* magazine includes a fantastic feature on life at Manor House Stables.

Writer Jennifer Donald, inset, visited the yard earlier this summer and enjoyed an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the yard and its state-of-the-art facilities with owner Michael Owen.

Michael told *H&H* that while he was involved with a few horses, there was no doubt Brown Panther was his favourite.

"It's a million to one to have a horse like him - he's the horse of your dreams, a once in a lifetime horse," said Michael, who went on to explain how the yard has gone from strength to strength since Tom took the helm in 2009.

● A short video filmed during Jennifer's visit, as well as a series of 24 photos, is accessible via the magazine's website, www.horseandhound.co.uk



Yard passes 2013 prize money total

WHILE July was the yard's quietest month for some time, we still sent out five winners and, with little more than half the year gone, have already surpassed the £517,568 we won in prize money in 2013.

What is more, besides the five victories, there were a number of other noteworthy performances, which promised plenty for the months ahead.

David Ward's three-year-old gelding The Kid got the ball rolling when landing a 1m5f Bath handicap, under an inspired ride from Richard Kingscote, on July 1.

The same owner's two-year-old colt Stec sprang a 33-1 surprise when winning a 7f Haydock maiden three days later and proved it was no flash in the pan when

following up in a more valuable Newbury conditions stakes some 15 days after that. On both occasions stable apprentice Jenny Powell was in the saddle and, quite rightly, received plenty of plaudits for forcing her mount home in front.

Jenny again showed herself in a good light when driving the two-year-old Snap Shots, owned in partnership by Sir Alex Ferguson and Ged Mason, to victory over the long odds-on favourite in a match, over the minimum trip, at Bath on July 24.

Showing Character was another juvenile winner when landing a valuable 5f Chester conditions stakes with consummate ease on July 11 - his second victory in as many starts - and could now head for the Gimcrack at York later this month.

While Brown Panther was unable to retain his crown in the Artemis Goodwood Cup last Thursday, the 2011 St Leger runner-up ran with credit to finish third behind the Godolphin pair Cavalryman and Ahzeemah. Earlier in the month, the six-year-old had finished a close-up second in the Group 2 Prix Maurice De Nieuil over 1m6f at Longchamp.

Cheworee was another inmate to perform with aplomb at Glorious Goodwood, finishing second of 21, beaten just three-quarters of a length, in a highly competitive 5f sprint. And the juvenile colt Koptoon looked a sure-fire future winner after finishing fourth, less than two lengths behind the winner, on his racecourse debut in a valuable 6f maiden at the same venue.

Michael in the saddle

MICHAEL Owen has made no secret of his desire to ride in a charity race and his progress towards this goal can now be viewed in a video accessible via the blog section of the Manor House Stables website.

The entry for Monday, July 7, contains some entertaining You Tube footage of Michael being put through his paces aboard 'a lively one'.

CHECK OUT WWW.MANORHOUSESTABLES.COM FOR MORE FROM THE YARD

A family affair atop five-to-follow table



Snap Shots has amassed 33 points

AS of the beginning of August, the Owen family were dominating this year's five-to-follow competition – occupying four of the leading five positions.

However, Jessica Owen, who enjoyed a 15-point advantage at the beginning of last month, has now been overhauled by sister Gemma and dad Michael at the top of the leaderboard.

Gemma has amassed 148 points – courtesy of Don Sig-

fredo [31], Roudee [26], Snap Shots [33], Barracuda Boy [10] and Brown Panther [48] – and is now 10 points clear of her father, who also occupies third place, with Jessica back in fifth.

Only Jimbo Reading on 117 points stands between the Owen family and a clean sweep at the top of the leaderboard. However, with substitutions now coming into effect, things could change quickly in the next few weeks.

Churches boosted by stable visit raffle

A CHARITY raffle which offered a visit to Manor House as one of the star prizes has raised more than £4,000 for two local churches.

And the lucky winner, who was accompanied by three guests, told us she had so many friends wanting to



Visitors to the yard

come along with her that she had contemplated arranging another draw to decide who they should be!

Reserve your place at golf day dinner

OUR annual golf day, at Chester's Carden Park Hotel on September 3, is now a sell-out.

However, if you weren't quick enough off the mark you haven't missed out on the

fun altogether – places are still available, at a cost of £60, for the three-course dinner, with comedian, which follows.

Call Lizzie on 01948 820485 to make a reservation.

Enjoy a flavour of leading racing journalist Alastair Down's insightful interview with Tom, as published in the **RACING POST** last month

Perfectionist in a happier place

Tom was quizzed by Alastair Down of the Racing Post



TOM Dascombe has always been a driven man but that is part of his endless perfectionism and on a fine sunny morning the 41-year-old seems more relaxed and happy in his own skin than of old – this former ferocious smoker managed to kick the habit on the way back from Brown Panther's run in the Melbourne Cup.

He says: "The first thing we did when I came at the end of 2009 was completely change the gallop to go uphill rather than down. We have built 24 paddocks, which means everything gets turned out for at least an hour a day.

"But I won't pretend that it hasn't been bloody challenging because when I was training in Lambourn I knew the gallops like the back of my hand. This place was totally different and, as in anything, you learn by your mistakes.

"Two years ago we had a blind season with 80 winners but last year we had snow on the ground from Christmas until Easter and it played havoc with us. We were always three months behind and playing catch-up. But we still had a decent season, with the quality going steadily upwards.

"I read in the papers someone saying 'Richard Kingscote is riding so well he ought to have a big job soon'. I thought b*****s to you mate – he's already got one."

Described by Dascombe as "a great fella, kind, genuine and honest", Kingscote joined the trainer back in his Lambourn days when still a claimer.

The appointment was the result of a memorably bad weekend at the office for Dascombe, who says: "It started on the Saturday when one we thought would run really well was given an absolute shocker of a ride at Musselburgh. Then, almost immediately after, we had the favourite for a decent race at Newmarket and in the final furlong the jockey managed to lose his stick, nearly fall off and ended up beaten less than a length in fourth.

"On the next day we had an important runner in France and we booked a famous figure in French racing to ride. I have to admit I came fairly close to killing him.

"He strolled into the paddock and went straight over for a long chat with Andre Fabre, which wasn't a great start. At the last minute he came and spoke to me and I told him I wanted him to make it on the horse.

"Well, he never gave him any sort of ride – sat in and didn't bother. It was embarrassing to watch. I kind of held back as he sauntered in and then he called over, 'Oi, don't you want to hear what I think?'

"I wanted to strangle him but said simply 'look you little s**t, you didn't even want to speak to me beforehand and, believe me, I don't want to listen to you now.

"The next day, when I had calmed down a bit, I sat down with a list of every jockey riding and crossed out everyone who already had a decent job or wouldn't suit.

"At the end there was just one name left. That was Richard Kingscote, who was at Roger Charlton's and had ridden fewer than 100 winners. I rang his agent and we have never looked back – he has just got better and better.

"And temperamentally I have grown with the job – I am a lot better too, I am no longer on occasional suicide watch!

"And I don't train for a single person who I wouldn't want to stay in my house and go out to have dinner with.

"This place was a bold venture and that is how it should be, because in racing you have to be brave."

You have to go out and grab racing because it won't come to you of its own accord, and Dascombe, both cleaner of wind and clearer of mind, has that restless streak of always trying to do the job better that is the essential prerequisite to training successfully.