

February 08

Well, our season was finally ignited by Ballyshan at Warwick, but with the considerable benefit of hindsight the horse had really done precious little wrong on his 3 runs prior to a return visit to the winner's enclosure.

At Chepstow he'd run perfectly respectably to finish 5th on ground too fast. Newbury was simply a non-event after the pre-race antics while at Bangor we sat too far off the pace and couldn't quicken on ground that was soft, but obviously not soft enough. What we know, as someone of even moderate intelligence would have discovered by now (sorry!!) is that Sean only has the one speed but stays forever. He needs really soft ground and is seen to best effect when getting out in front and dictating. Paddy carried this out to perfection on January 12th when, aided by a



fluent round of jumping, he picked up a valuable qualifier for the Pertemps Final. He may have won only narrowly, but it was also, in my view, a shade cosily and in the process he spread more than a little happiness (and money!) amongst JFF membership. In fact he delivered the best part of £500 to each member's bank balance as the £20K added value provided owners prize money of £9,900 so it was a very nice race to pick up. Somebody more creative might even claim that it was an astute piece of placing, but with NT-D that would be stretching credibility to the limit. Some of the happy snaps from Warwick are displayed within this newsletter and these can be viewed on the JFF website which also details how copies may be ordered if you're interested.

Put up a pretty fair 5lb by the handicapper to a revised mark of 123 we went back to the same venue on the 24th for a race that looked a bit more competitive even though it carried only a third of the prize money.

In the event I wasn't able to celebrate my birthday with another win - in fact we didn't even come close. A mistake at the first set the tone for a moderate round of jumping, but the post-race view of jockey and trainer was that the race had simply come too quick on his previous Warwick heroics as he really didn't threaten to get involved. Beaten 5 out he was immediately eased and was allowed to come home in his own time and will now have a 3-4 week break before hopefully finding something suitable in February as long as the ground holds up.

This sort of timing would certainly fit in with the Cheltenham Festival where, as you know, Sean is qualified for the Pertemps Hurdle Final on Tuesday March 11th. With his official rating of 123 he's far from certain to get in the race, particularly with soft ground now a Cheltenham rarity, but





Doug and Debbie Chalmers, Gerald Masey and the trainer collect the prize.

he'll have an entry and this will give us something to dream about across the coming weeks.

Club member James Jessemey is talking about putting Ballyshan's 3 victories on one DVD and if you'd like to have one of these then give Jess a call on 01451 830597 or see him the next time we're racing.

Ace Of Clubs

Meanwhile, back in the muddy fields of Naunton. Ace is having a whale of a time doing nothing! He won't be back in action until next season but time seems to be working its healing powers and I'm sure he'll be winning races in 08/09. He'll go back into training in July.

3rd Horse

A total of 11 JFF members have joined forces to purchase a 3rd horse and an athletic 4YO gelding by New Frontier was purchased at the Dundalk Breeze Up Sale earlier in the month for 23,000 euros. The new acquisition, as yet unnamed, will run under the auspices of Jump For Fun 2 and is expected to arrive in Naunton sometime in March. He's currently at Kevin Ross' livery yard in N. Ireland where he'll have 8 weeks or so before going into full training. He's apparently quite well forward and should be ready to run in a bumper sometime in the Spring.

Membership

A few non-renewals of late (thankfully before Ballyshan's Warwick win!) mean that numbers have dwindled slightly and currently stand at 23. As with all things there are positives and negatives to take from this, the positives being that the Club's easier to administrate and there's more prize money per head, the downside being that running costs (renewals) inevitably increase commensurately. My overview is that we've got a good nucleus of members who are sharing the highs (and lows!) of horse syndication and who appear to enjoy the experience and involvement with Nigel and his team. In many ways small is beautiful, though that's hardly an apt analogy in the case of Twiston-Davies, but you doubtless get my giste.

I look forward to catching up again soon.

Best Wishes

Regards,

Bob Sims

H: 01442 842955

M: 07871 571054