

Introduction

With the first news update of our recently hatched racing club it's a warm welcome from everyone involved with Jump For Fun to both members who've taken out subscriptions and those still deliberating on whether to join our ranks. The aim is to provide a monthly written update for everyone in JFF, this to give news on what's going on in the stable generally as well as providing more in-depth reports on club horses. The newsletter will be in addition to news updates given on the club website (www.jumpforfunracing.co.uk) as I've been made fully aware that not all members are keen to embrace the electronic news highway. As a semi-retired person within sight of the pension winning post I can only say that I'm totally understanding of this view! Hence we'll aim to communicate with you regularly whatever your preference. Simply let me know what this is if you haven't already done so.

Membership

As I write these initial notes a few days after the Hennessey meeting and only 5 weeks after the Club received its first media mention it's gratifying to report on the level of interest that Jump For Fun has generated. Over 100 information packs have been sent out to interested parties and with the Club explanatory brochure having just been mailed out to Tote Credit customers I'm anticipating a continuation in the enquiry level over the weeks ahead. To date we have 20 paid up members, still some way short of the intended optimum figure of 200, but an encouraging take up figure given that hardly any advertising has been run.

It's been interesting to receive feed back from people on their "ideal" club membership number. Some view 200 as being somewhat on the unwieldy and impersonal side while others would seemingly be happy with a few more. It's a moot point and proves yet again the old adage that you can't please all the people all of the time. One of the reasons for launching Jump For Fun was down to the fact that, as far as I could see, there weren't really any racing clubs that offered genuine fun and involvement to a limited membership who, at the same time, could enjoy the thrill of ownership spread across a number of horses.

On the one extreme there is the likes of Elite Racing with over 18,000 members (which for me is far too impersonal) and then there are clubs like Favourites Racing

wherein members are invited to simply buy into a syndicate for a particular horse. Given the tendency for N.H. horses particularly to pick up injuries this seems to be potentially fraught in terms of consistent enjoyment/involvement. With Jump For Fun we've sought to embrace the best of all worlds, but as somebody once said, "you pays your money and makes your choice".

We hope we've hit on a formula that both appeals and works, but this is YOUR club, so we value your feedback.

The Horses

As a point of grammatical accuracy, this headline should really be amended to "the horse", but as we're aiming to at least double the current singular representation in the near future I hope that you'll give me at least a bit of creative licence.

Ballyshan, an attractive son of Synefos out of a Supreme Leader mare, duly got Jump For Fun Racing on the scoreboard when running a fine 2nd at Leicester last Sunday in a 2½ mile novice hurdle. In the process he earned members the princely sum of £2,066.45 so if you've taken out membership you've already recouped some of the subscription cost!

Ballyshan, or Sean as he's known to his devoted lass Jo, was unfortunate in the way the race panned out as he was left in front well over a mile from home when the leader ran out. His jumping, when left in isolation, erred very much on the safe side and jockey Marc Goldstein reported that he forfeited ground at most obstacles by getting in too close to the bottom of his hurdles. Sean was also plagued by the loose horse all the way up the straight which, on top of losing ground both by avoiding the leader when he ducked out and then by hanging away from the whip, cost him all of the 6 lengths by which he was officially beaten. The upside is that he was running on at the finish in the manner of a horse who wouldn't mind a step up in distance. Therefore Nigel Twiston-Davies will probably look at a race over 3 miles next and as Sean had a good blow after what was effectively his first race for nearly 2 years he'll strip fitter next time when hopefully he can go one better.

Club members Bob Goss and his family from Buckingham and James Jessemey from Barnet were equally enthused by Ballyshan's first run, the moreso as both had travelled to Huntingdon the previous Saturday only for Nigel to pull all the horses out due to the ground firming up. Hopefully Sean's next run will see more JFF members present.



It was also gratifying to see Jo & Sean receive the award for Best Turned Out. Well done Jo!

Next Horse

The search continues for Ballyshan's next club mate and we're currently still hunting for number two in Ireland. Utilising the services of Kevin Ross from Bloodstock Ireland we've recently looked at a 3YO off the flat from Kevin



Prendergast's yard and a 4YO, also from the flat, from John Oxx. Neither fitted the bill, the former because of the uncertainty regarding his suitability for a career over hurdles and the latter due to a long term splint problem.

The spotlight has now swung onto a 6YO gelding by Shernazar who recently won a point to point at Ratoath impressively under J.T. McNamara. We'll keep you informed of developments.

Grange Hill Farm Stables

The past couple of weeks have been relatively disappointing after the glut (7!) of winners a few weekends back. There's been an outbreak of "seconditis" at the yard and only 2 wins in the past fortnight, both courtesy of Miss Shakira, have taken the tally of successes to the brink of 30. As at the close of business on November 29th Nigel stood 9th in the Trainers' table with 29 wins from 180 runners. Add the prize money won by 22 2nds and 13 3rds and a total of £247K had been brought back to Naunton by the yard's horses.

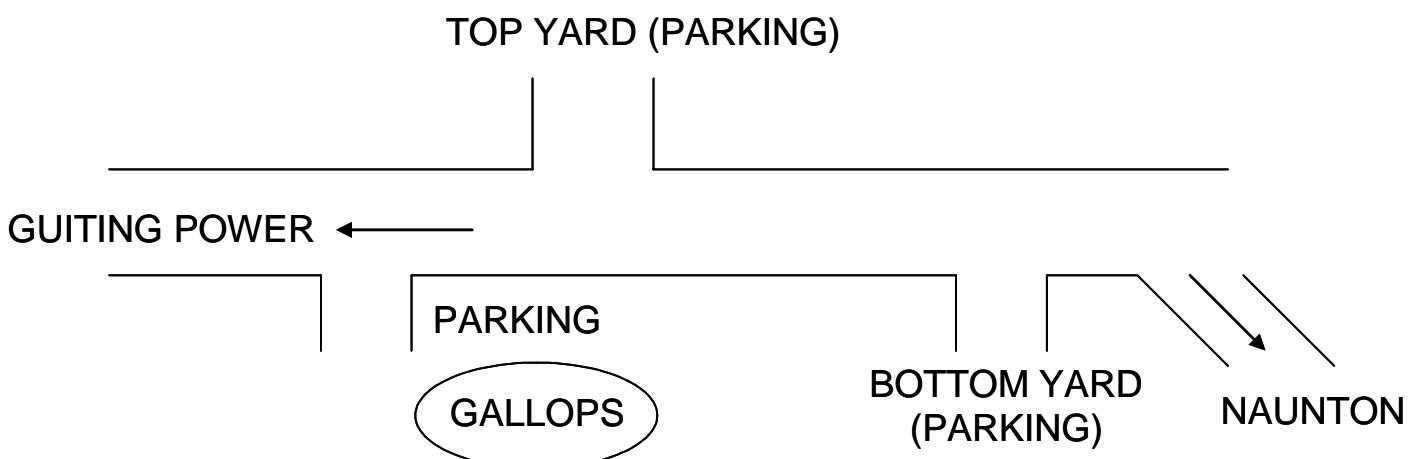
Nigel feels that a few of the inmates haven't quite been getting home and has therefore changed the straw with hopefully positive results. It's nothing major and most of the horses look, and have been running well, but possibly they've just lost an "edge" for the moment. It would be good to clock up a few more wins on the run to Christmas.

Stable Visit

As many of you will know, the first stable visit has been set for Friday December 9th. This date coincides with racing at Cheltenham in the afternoon so that people can make a day of it if so inclined.

The stable visit has been set for 9.0 which will hopefully allow sufficient time for those travelling any distance to do the journey. Some people have already indicated opting for local bed and breakfast to avoid any traffic problems early on the Friday, but whatever you decide I would simply ask that you let me know if you intend to come simply so that I can let The Hollow Bottom know how many they can expect for breakfast after we've finished at the stables.

For those of you who've not been to the stables before here's a (very) rough map/directions.



Grange Hill Farm is ½ mile from Naunton, 1 mile from Guiting Power. Any of the locals will be able to direct you.

You can park in either the top or bottom yard or at the top of the gallops, but space is generally at a premium so please park as neatly as possible. We'll meet on the gallops at around 9.0 to watch the horses work and chat with Nigel and the team and then decamp to The Hollow Bottom in Guiting Power for breakfast at around 10.0. This should leave ample time for those planning to go on to Cheltenham. The gallops/yard can get very muddy. A change of sensible footwear is advised. Remember, this visit is open to members and prospective members alike. All welcome! I look forward to seeing many of you on the 9th.
Best regards meanwhile.

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