

WINTER 2006/7

The
KINGSCLERE
Quarter



THE PARK HOUSE STABLES NEWSLETTER

The KINGSCLERE Quarter



PHOENIX REACH 2006

Front cover: David Probert
Back cover: Misty Mornings

CONTENTS

PARK HOUSE PARTNERSHIP 2007	2
THE 2006 SEASON	3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8
ANDREW BALDING	
OBITUARY: DAVID ALLPORT	8
DISTANT PROSPECT	9
PHOENIX REACH	10 & 11
THE APPRENTICE	12
I.A.B.	
12 TO FOLLOW RESULTS	13, 14, & 15
THE MELBOURNE CUP 2006	16 & 17
CLARE BALDING	
IT'S A TECHNICAL KNOCK OUT...	18 & 19
ANNA LISA BALDING	

.....
 Editor: Emma Balding
 Design: Adrian Hodgkins
 Photography: Malcolm Harris, Trevor Morrison,
 Andrew Watkins, Charles Salisbury-Plaice, Anna Lisa Balding
 Contributors: Emma Balding, Andrew Balding, Ian Balding,
 Anna Lisa Balding, Clare Balding
 © Park House Stables
 Published by Park House Stables, Park House, Kingsclere, Newbury,
 Berks. RG20 5PY
 Telephone: 01635 298210 Fax: 01635 298305
www.kingsclere.com
 Printed and typeset by Joshua Horgan, Oxford

PARK HOUSE PARTNERSHIP 2007

We are planning to have three horses in this syndicate
 – all two year olds.



MIND GAMES – SALACIOUS (Colt)



ALHAARTH – VIJANTI (Filly)



OBSERVATORY – SNIPE HALL (Filly)

There will be twelve shares at £9,519 each which is a deal including purchase and all training expenses for the 2007 flat season only. The only extra will be if they travel abroad to race and we normally find horses do not run overseas unless they have earned plenty of money already!

Full details of the deal are available from Emma Balding at Park House, Kingsclere, Newbury, Berks. e-mail address emmabalding@aol.com.

THE 2006 SEASON

by Andrew Balding

As the curtain closes on another flat season, the opportunity to reflect is always welcome but when looking back on 2006 there is a gaping void in terms of the yard's achievements this year. Whilst we have managed to amass a very respectable winners and prize money total in the UK this year, including Listed winners and success at many of the high profile meetings; it is the first season since I started training that we have not had Group One success. In fact we have enjoyed only one victory at

every chance of making it to group class at some stage next season and names such as Kalankari, Chantaco, Sirens Gift, Border Music, Sabah, Water Mill, Yeamans Hall and My Learned Friend to name just a few, would appear to have plenty more to offer in 2007.

The season started with a bang in January with a steady stream of winners on the all weather, Briareus' emergence as a leading national hunt prospect and an excellent win for Pentecost at the Dubai Carnival. Kalankari put up a dazzling display at Kemp-



KALANKARI

Group/Graded level all year.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for 'smaller' yards to compete at the top level as the temptation to sell your best performers is often too great to resist given the current market value of proven performers. But success at the top level is still the barometer that we want to use when assessing the merits of our achievements.

Having said that 2006 has been a platform for developing a number of equine talents that have



CHANTACO

ton in March when running out an easy 5 length winner of a very competitive three year old handicap. Consistent but winless in a busy two year old campaign, he continued to improve with each run this year and whilst only winning twice he showed some top class handicap form throughout the season, with a number of excellent placed efforts. Kalankari has many qualities not least his appetite for work and for racing and he is a horse that if he can remain free from injuries, can progress again as a four year

old and I have no doubt that he will prove himself at group level in 2007.

Chantaco managed to win the prestigious and valuable Zetland Gold Cup at Redcar in early summer, which was some compensation for two desperately unlucky placed efforts in his first two starts of the season. Tough and consistent he rarely fails to run his race whatever the ground conditions and having been gelded this autumn it would not be that surprising to seem him step up a level next summer.

Sirens Gift was the star of the show amongst the two year olds from the day that she arrived at Kingsclere. A first class pedigree, with the looks and confirmation to go with it, she oozed class and ability from the very first time she went upsides. She however, provided her trainer with the worst day's racing of the year when she travelled to Bath for her intended debut on the eve of the Derby. Martin Dwyer had been so impressed by her home work that he had chartered a helicopter to fly him from Epsom to Bath in order



SIREN'S GIFT

to ride her and must have been rueing that decision when he was hurled to the floor three times running when trying to mount her in the paddock! Having to witness your jockey lying motionless on the tarmac fourteen hours before he is due to ride one of the fancied runners in the world's biggest race as your best filly careers loose around the paddock is not an experience to recommend! As things turned out, the press were supplied with some great ammunition when Martin passed the doctor to win the Derby...

Loch Verdi made sure that Jeff Smith's trip to Bath was not in vain when sluicing up in the last race...and Sirens Gift got her act together eventually and turned out to be one of the season's top sprinting juvenile fillies! She will return to training as a three year old and should have every chance to enjoy a successful year as she will compete without any penalties at listed level which should ease her introduction into the better sprint races later in the summer.

Border Music is widely regarded as one of the best 'poly track' performers in the UK. He has a Timeform rating on the all weather of 113+ and has impressed the clock watchers with some excellent time figures in the process. With the advent of poly track in the United States his options have now been opened up considerably and whilst he has put in some creditable efforts on the grass this year his form on an all weather surface is so superior he will be campaigned accordingly in 2007. He boasts an impressive cruising speed which is the key to his success on the artificial



BORDER MUSIC winner of 4 races on the polytrack 05/06

surface and if he retains his ability as a 6 year old he has what it takes to competitive in the top American stakes races on poly track.

Sabah is another horse who enjoyed a successful season in 2006 but should go on to bigger and better things next year. Unraced as a two year old, she developed an aversion to starting stalls as strong as any we have seen at Kingsclere! With the help, patience and bravery of stalls guru Gary Witherford and jockey Neil Chalmers, she raced four times this

season winning once and placing on the three other occasions. The last of those was in a very competitive fillies listed race at Bath where she finished an excellent third. A big, robust filly, who will improve physically from three to four she has yet to race on a soft surface which may yet bring about further improvement in her performance. The re-designed distaff programme in this country has helped enormously in making sense of keeping fillies like Sabah in training as older horses and I would love to see her take advantage of the increased opportunities now available to her.

Water Mill is the most expensive horse that I have ever been involved in buying, but his \$330,000 price tag seemed like good value when he won at Kempton on his debut. The statistics show that he was one of an unusually low number of horses capable of making a winning debut on the new all weather track, why this should be is not entirely obvious but it would suggest that the track is probably more demanding than the

Mill's first big objective of the year should give us a fair indication of how far he can climb in 2007.

Yeaman's Hall was always going to need time to fulfil his considerable potential. He is a son of the all dancing, all conquering sire of the season and would appear to be a typical example of Gallileo's middle distance progeny. The fact that he had enough class to finish an excellent second in a strongly competitive Newbury maiden whilst still some way from his full physical capacity, is a good indication that this colt may be better than the average. He will start off in maiden company next season and will hopefully improve to go on to better things as the season progresses.

My Learned Friend is a half brother to Kalankari and like him improved with every race of his juvenile career. A winner of a decent novice event at Lingfield on his third career start, he looked exceptionally well handicapped on a BHB rating of 83 and the temptation to pitch him in to group company had to be avoided! Sadly this gift was not fully exploited as an unusually



SABAH with Neil Chalmers up



SI FOO wins at Windsor

other all weather circuits. Add to this the fact that he drew the outside stall and the merit of his victory over a field that included two previous winners becomes even more commendable. The strong 'dirt' influence in Water Mill's pedigree and the impressions that we gleaned from his work at home suggest that he will be best suited by the same surface that almost all of his sire's offspring seem to excel on. Whether it be the UAE Guineas/Derby at Nad Al Sheeba or one of the recognised Kentucky Derby trials in early spring Water

wet week meant the ground at Ascot was unsuitably soft for his handicap bow. He did however manage a highly respectable third in spite of the adverse going conditions and remains on a very attractive handicap mark for his three year old campaign. I hope that he will prove testament to the fact that it is still possible to purchase top class performers as yearlings without having to mortgage the house!

Jeff Smith's pair of three year old sprinters Dark Missile and Loch Verdi both enjoyed fine seasons

at handicap level and are exciting prospects for next year. The former won one of the richest three year old handicaps in Europe when taking the Tote Sport Sprint at the Newmarket July meeting. Considering that her trainer had tried to persuade her owner to sell her at the close of last season it was a just reward to Jeff's 'have a go' approach to racing. A very pessimistic vets report last autumn suggested that Dark Missile might not stand another season of racing. Thanks mainly to the wonderful facilities we are so lucky to have access to and the filly's resilience, she managed to race a total of nine times and added to the Newmarket victory with a win in the Shergar Cup Distaff at Ascot. A total haul of just short of £75,000 for the year made her the single highest earner for the yard in 2006 and made the trainer a very relieved man that she had avoided her proposed trip to the sales last autumn!

Loch Verdi on the other hand was always expected to show her talents this summer and two victories and



DINGAAN wins at Lingfield

three placed efforts from her six starts only scratched the surface of what this filly is capable of. Her mother is none other than the great Lochsong and whilst she has a long way to go if she is to mirror her mum's illustrious career, her racecourse achievements so far, are officially superior to those achieved by her dam at the same age. Loch Verdi, like her mother is very fast and if she can strengthen physically over the winter she will be a force to be reckoned with over the minimum distance. She also has a younger brother by Anaaba

called Lochstar and although unraced as a two year old, showed enough at home to suggest that he too could be enhancing the family's reputation in 2007.

Dingaan was our third leading money earner and the most prolific winner of the season. A full brother to stable stalwart Pentecost he too could develop into a top notch handicapper, if he can learn to channel his energies in the right direction! Irony and Banknote are both firm favourites in the yard and whilst "Ronnie's" grey hairs are getting whiter in colour his enthusiasm for racing is showing no signs of dimming. He showed real determination in his two wins this term and finished the season with an excellent second in a valuable handicap at Chester in September a course that he will certainly be returning to at some stage next season.

Banknote has also showed a liking for a racecourse in the North West and his record at Haydock now stands at two wins and a second from three runs. His half sister Verbatim (by Vettori) is very different in make and shape but is a filly that could just prove a horse to follow next summer as she is bound to build on a her highly encouraging debut run this Autumn.

Streets Ahead was officially the best two year old to race for the stable in 2006. Like the majority of our two year olds he took a couple of runs to get the hang of things before going on to win his maiden race at Salisbury and then stepping up again the following week to win a Listed race at the same venue. As I have already mentioned, these types of horses have a considerable premium attached and it would take a very brave man to reject the enormous profit his owners were then offered on a horse who had originally cost 20,000 guineas! Purchased by Team Valor, he raced for the last time for us in the Grade 2 Summer Stakes where he finished a respectable fourth behind the Beeders Cup heroine Dreaming Of Anna and has since joined Neil Drysdale to continue his racing career in the States.

Ollie George's achievements in 2006 are tribute to the effect that blinkers can have on certain horses. Beaten out of site on his first two outings of the year the application of blinkers produced a metamorphosis in his attitude to racing and his subsequent results read 3212210 the last of which should have resulted

in another placing. He has since been gelded which may seem a harsh reward for his endeavours, but will almost certainly aid his development into what we hope will be a top class middle distance handicapper.

Holbeck Ghyll is a horse that we are still trying to understand fully. He had finished last season with a hat trick of wins and hopes were high for an equally successful campaign this season. He managed just one win and one place from his eight outings but his win at the Glorious Goodwood meeting was so emphatic that he turned what is usually one of the most competitive sprints of its type into a one horse procession. He still has his best years before him and I hope that we can find out what makes him tick on race days and what it is that causes him to throw in the occasional lack lustre effort.

Mr Lambros is proving a very tough horse to pass at Lingfield and his two early season wins stamped him as a formidable opponent to any horse in the



HOLBECK GHYLL wins at Glorious Goodwood

7 furlong all weather bracket. He is due to travel to Dubai this winter and if he can adapt to the dirt surface at Nad al Sheeba he could also be a force to be reckoned with under those conditions at the carnival.

The Hitchins' Vanderlin and Pentecost are others who are due to travel out to Dubai in the New Year and neither are short of experience when it comes to travelling! Vanderlin had started the year in splendid style when winning the Listed Doncaster Mile and

followed that by narrowly missing silver and bronze medals in the Group 1 Champions Mile in Hong Kong. Although he finished a fine second under a huge penalty at Chester his season then rather went off the rails with two unusually poor efforts. He may have been feeling the aches and pains of old age, but a well earned rest and preparation on some yielding turf seem to have him back to somewhere near his best at home. Pentecost also started the season off in style when winning the Dubai Plate but apart from a top class effort when finishing fifth in the Royal Hunt Cup the rest of the year was somewhat of a disappointment. The enthusiasm still burns bright at home and I hope that he still has one or two more big race wins left in him.

Gordonsville is a horse who has a mountain of unfulfilled potential and remains a stayer of considerable promise. Still a maiden he was placed in the most competitive staying handicap for his age group run all year and I would make it long odds on that a



PENTECOST wins at the Dubai Carnival

maiden win will be just the start of his campaign if he can keep a clean bill of health. Another horse who deserves a clean bill of health is Shade Cozy. Dogged by injury and misfortune he is lucky to have owners who have remained patient through the seemingly countless setbacks that the horse has suffered. I have no doubt that this patience will pay off if we can keep Shade Cozy injury free.

Si Foo, Buccellati and Oceana Gold are three horses that were successful as two year olds in spite of being

more the types to do better as time progresses. Buccellati was bought by Tony Noonan for Peter and Jennifer McMahon and finished a three race campaign with a win at Warwick and an excellent second in a competitive back end nursery at Newmarket. Oceana Gold is owned and bred by Karl Fischer and is open to any amount of physical improvement this winter and looks to have been allotted a sensible handicap mark. Norman Cheng's homebred Si Foo has shown considerable promise in his two starts to date including

a win in a Windsor maiden that has produced a number of subsequent winners.

There are numerous other unraced or lightly raced horses in the yard that may still have what it takes to win races and, whilst a horse of Phoenix Reach's calibre may be hard to replace, I remain very hopeful that amongst our present crop there are more than enough candidates for one of them to take on his mantle. ■

DAVID ALLPORT



It was with great sadness and regret that we learnt of the death of David Allport in October of his year. David had been involved with many horses at Kingsclere over the past fifteen years. Nearly all of them carried the instantly recognisable HOH prefix. Derived from the name of his oil supply company David used the word to create a seemingly endless source of amusing names. Hoh Wotanite, Hoh Bleu Dee, Hoh Bleu Da,

Hoh Hoh Hoh, Hoh Hoh Seven, Double Hoh Seven, Hoh Dear, Hoh Vis to name but some.

Probably the best horse that David owned was the Michael Bell trained Hoh Magic whom he shared with Bob Michaelson and only this year the hugely promising juvenile Hoh Mike carried his colours with distinction at group level.

David was a larger than life character, his specially tailored suits and shoes were quite unique in both colour and style and made him one of the most colourful figures on the racecourse. He was also a very generous supporter of racing charities and the numerous auctions held on British racecourses. David was always game to pay over the odds for something he didn't really want just to 'support the cause'. This type of generosity was evident at a charity auction held at Windsor earlier this year, when, having missed out on buying a number of the top lots, he paid an enormous amount of money for a pair of Grand Prix driving gloves once worn by the Formula One driver Mark Webber. When asked where in his house he was going to display his new acquisition, David replied that he had bought them for Anne Marie to garden in!

It is incredibly sad to think that someone who you would instantly associate with fun and laughter should take his own life and David will be sorely missed at Kingsclere both as an owner and a friend. ■

DISTANT PROSPECT



2006 saw the retirement of one of the stable's favourite campaigners

Distant Prospect had been trained in his early years by Rupert Arnold and the longevity of his career is a tribute to the patience that Rupert showed at this crucial stage.

Owned in partnership by David, Johnnie and Alan Rae Smith and John and Pauline Gale, he arrived at Kingsclere in the summer of 2000 when Rupert retired from training to take up his role as Chief Executive of the National Trainers Federation.

A very wet autumn provided D.P. with the soft ground essential for him and he made the most of a lenient handicap mark in scoring a quick fire hat trick of wins in September and October. For the next five seasons Distant Prospect became a standing dish in all the top staying handicaps. His win in the 2001 Cesarewitch was the highlight of a long and distinguished career on the flat, but he became a victim of his own consistency

as the handicapper provided little respite during this period and it prevented him from ever winning on the flat again.

He was a late starter to the jumping game but his natural enthusiasm made him into the most proficient jumper of a hurdle that we have seen at Kingsclere. A three length win in the Gerry Feilden at Newbury was his best performance over hurdles and in all his racing career saw him win six and be placed in thirteen of his forty three starts, winning almost £180,000 in prize money.

Distant Prospect is a real character and although small in stature he is a big personality and it took all the skill and expertise of his lad, Richard 'Chad' Phillips, to hang on to him after his post morning exercise roll. We all wish D.P. a long and happy retirement from racing. ■

PHOENIX REACH



- Purchased for 36,000gns at the Doncaster St Leger Sale
- Raced for 5 seasons
- Winner of 5 races
- Winner of 3 Group 1 races
- Raced in 8 different countries
- Raced in 12 consecutive Group 1 races from 2003-2006

2002 83+ Timeform
2003 122p Timeform
2004 124 Timeform
2005 124 Timeform

CAN \$ 1,200,000 / AED 4,164,057
Yen 20,118,000 / HK \$ 8,043,100
£ 95,000

TOTAL earnings £1,975,356
Standing at £3,500 n.f.n.f. at The National Stud, Newmarket



THE APPRENTICE

by I.A.B.

Like every other sphere of life conditions in the world of racing have changed over the last thirty or forty years. Horses are trained differently. Basically they have far less graft nowadays compared to yesteryear but to my surprise are every bit as fit coming into a race as they used to be. That they are more fragile currently, there is no doubt – although whether to blame the breeders rather than the trainers for this would be an interesting argument.

What I want to discuss now, however, is the change in life generally and in conditions for the young apprentice jockey compared to the 1960s and 70s. In the old days any prospective young jockey came straight from school and used to have to do a five year apprenticeship with a licensed trainer. He had to depend totally on his "guvnor" both to teach him to ride in the first place and then to find him rides once he had proved himself worthy of getting a licence. All earnings from race riding went automatically into the trainer's account and any part of it passed on to the apprentice himself was dependent on the whim of his 'master'. I keep repeating he or him because at that time a female apprentice was unheard of. Indeed there were very few girls at all working in racing stables.

Apprentices at Kingsclere were probably better treated than at most other stables, but even here the young boys were used to being disciplined by the trainer and senior members of staff. There were certain unpleasant traditions such as 'greasing' where the newcomer was not considered part of the team until he had been initiated. The boys were expected to work all afternoon whilst their seniors rested. The trainer might take them stone-picking on the plough gallop or treading in on the grass gallops. Others would hold horses whilst the stable farrier shod them. Boxing and football were the sports in which they all took part and most of our best apprentices were also good boxers. Philip Waldron for example, who beat none other than Pat Eddery to win the apprentice championship in 1968 also won the bantamweight title at the stable lads boxing finals at the Hilton Hotel in the previous year.

For many years we had a wonderful couple called Harvey and Joyce Watts who ran our hostel. Joyce was a superb cook who treated the youngsters like her own children and Harvey ensured good manners and



good time keeping. I have always felt that discipline for these youngsters was paramount in the transition from promising apprentice to successful jockey. The need to keep a level head, to be polite and punctual and most importantly to maintain a constant weight would never be easy for an ill-disciplined boy in racing. The apprentice jockey has always been considerably less spoilt than for example the young footballer. Ernie Johnson, Philip Waldron, John Matthias and Martin Dwyer have, over the years, been

Kingsclere graduates who became top class jockeys.

Times of course have changed and now the boys and girls sign on for a three year apprenticeship but seem able to move to another stable at their slightest whim. They all have to do a six week course at the British or Northern Racing Schools where they learn to ride before joining a trainer and as soon as they get a licence they get their own agent to book all their rides. This in fact takes some pressure off the current over-worked trainer's secretary. Riding fees are nowadays shared equally between trainer and apprentice and working in the afternoons, apart from occasionally helping the blacksmith, is a thing of the past. Happily one custom that still exists here is that the youngest boys or girls are required to run the line for the Drag Hunt at the two Kingsclere winter meets!!

The two extremely promising young boys who were mentioned in the last Quarter - William Buick and David Probert – have in my opinion as good a chance of making the grade as any youngsters I have seen in my forty odd years here. William has already ridden 4 winners and shown himself to possess most of the qualities of a natural jockey. They both have exactly the right physique to keep weight problems to a minimum and are excellent natural horsemen with the desire and intelligence to realise what is needed from themselves to go all the way. What of course is also necessary is the luck that is so vital to everyone in racing and particularly in their case with regard to avoiding serious injury. They will have the advantage of riding lots of gallops both together and with senior jockeys, giving each other support as well as competitive rivalry. They will also be given lots of opportunities by and encouragement from their trainer as well as enthusiasm from their own families. ■

Watch this space for their progress.

THE 2006 **12** TO FOLLOW COMPETITION

It looks like a slightly less closely fought competition this year with Angela Cheshire emerging as a clear winner with a good score of 220. Her entry showed the benefit of consistency with every one of her selections contributing to the winning score except for one two year old, Bright Forecast.

The young trainer confounded his critics by finishing 2nd, the only other score over 200 – rather a contrast to his position in the official 12 club competition.

Elizabeth Harris wins the wooden spoon prize – although this year that prize was won with a respectable score of 42.

1st £588.50 2nd £267.50 3rd £160.50 4th £53.50

Wooden Spoon – £5 Refunded!

1	CHESHIRE, ANGELA (B)	220
2	BALDING, ANDREW	207
3	COPE, CORD (A)	199
4	KNOWLES, SHIREE	193
5	GRUBB, PETER	187

6 WEEDY, M	184	26 STRONG, LUKE (A)	156	46 BROWN, K	139
7 CHESHIRE, NATHAN	183	27 GREEN, MARION (B)	155	47 MORRIS, CHERYL (A)	138
8 IRELAND, GORDON (B)	180	28 BALDING, ANNALISA	154	47 O'BRIEN, DR/MRS (C)	138
8 KING, GAIL	180	28 WHITLOCK, LOLA	154	49 HYDE, MRS J	137
10 OSWALD, M SIR	176	30 CHALMERS, T	152	49 MORRIS, CHERYL (B)	137
11 DERBYSHIRE/CHIVERS (B)	175	30 MCPHEE, ANGUS	152	51 SLADE, MRS VALERIE	136
11 PLUMMER, ANN (B)	175	32 WILLIAMS, P	151	52 COUSINS, ROSE	135
13 MCPHEE, STUART	171	33 BONNER, CHRIS	150	52 SAVORY, P	135
14 DILLON, BATT (B)	170	33 PINK PARTNERSHIP	150	52 WEEDY, C	135
15 WILSON, JDB	168	33 STANSBY, CLIVE (A)	150	55 AEBERHARD, W	134
16 FRAMPTON, PAT	167	36 HALE, BARRY (A)	149	55 GRUBB, GEORGIA	134
17 GORDON, SUZIE (C)	165	36 PARIS, REX (B)	149	55 GRUBB, SARAH	134
17 IRELAND, ANNE (B)	165	38 GOVER, TONY	148	55 ROGERS, JAMES	134
19 COPE, CORD (C)	163	38 PLUMMER, ANN (A)	148	59 BACK, DH	132
19 COVENTRY, BRYAN	163	40 MCWILLIAM, K/J	147	60 MULLIGAN, ALEX	131
19 MAHER, T	163	40 MICHAELSON, RPB	147	61 CHONG, GARY	130
22 PRINCE, RUPERT	162	40 STRONG, LUKE (B)	147	61 COLEMAN, G	130
23 REES, LINDY	161	43 GRUBB, OLIVER	146	61 GREEN, MARION (A)	130
24 FEANE, PADDY	159	44 SMITH, JC	145	64 CHALMERS, J	129
25 HALLAS, GARY (B)	157	45 KENT, MARK (B)	143	64 HMB	129

66 FINLAY, R	128	106 LEE-ROBINSON, NICK	111	150 POWELL, DAVID (A)	93
66 LEANNE	128	106 WILSON, DAVE	111	151 CHESHIRE, ANGELA (A)	92
66 PHIPPS, A	128	110 SLADE, MARTIN	110	151 HALE, P	92
66 SHARLAND, R	128	111 BROUGHTON, T	109	153 BLAKE, T	91
70 BARBER, D	127	111 CHRISTOU, K/A	109	153 DERBYSHIRE, TINA	91
70 RAE SMITH, MA (A)	127	111 PAYTON, MICHAEL	109	153 PARIS, REX (A)	91
72 COVENTRY, SERENA	126	114 PARDOE, ROBERT (B)	108	153 SIMPSON, ANDREW	91
72 PARDOE, ROBERT (A)	126	115 SMITH, JENNIFER	107	157 HALL, SIMON	90
74 MCWILLIAM, RONNIE	125	116 ADAMS, BRENDAN	106	157 PLUMBLY, HELEN	90
74 OVETT, NICK	125	116 ELLISON, J	106	159 BALDING, CLARE	88
76 CHALMERS, N	123	118 RAE SMITH, MA (B)	105	159 JOHNSON/BOUNDS (B)	88
76 KENT, MARK (A)	123	118 SIMS	105	159 PALMER, CECILIA	88
78 DILLON, BATT (A)	122	120 HALE, BARRY (B)	104	162 ARNOLD, ALICE	87
78 MICHAELSON, ROGER	122	121 BUTCHER, MRS G	103	162 BAVEYSTOCK, H	87
80 DERBYSHIRE/CHIVERS (A)	121	121 LUMLEY, PETER	103	162 STANSBY, CLIVE (B)	87
80 JOHNSON/BOUNDS (A)	121	121 REIS, PAUL	103	165 HALL, MELANIE	86
80 RHODES, MELVIN	121	121 WALIC, R	103	165 TOLHURST, ANDY	86
83 DERBYSHIRE, I	119	125 KINGSCLERE STUD	102	167 BALDING, M R & C	85
83 HARRIS, NIGEL (A)	119	125 RANSOM, S	102	167 DOCHERTY, T	85
83 MCDUGALL, RODDY	119	127 DOWDING, J	101	167 EATON, P	85
86 BEDFORD, PETER	118	127 HOWSON, GEOFFREY	101	170 CHESHIRE, A/N (A)	84
86 DANGER, RICHARD	118	127 PALMER, ANNE	101	170 LYSAGHT, C	84
86 LUMLEY, SUE	118	130 HALL, DAVID	100	170 REEVES, NICKI	84
89 BARING, TOM	117	130 HUMPHRIES, G	100	173 MACKINNON, BRIDGET	83
89 CHARLTON, M (A)	117	130 RANSOM, MRS G	100	173 NEVIN, MARK	83
89 GEE, SIMON	117	133 ARNOLD, PAM	99	175 O'BRIEN, DR/MRS (D)	82
89 HALL, BEVERLEY	117	134 CASLON, S	98	175 STILLINGS, MARK	82
89 IRELAND, GORDON (A)	117	134 GEE, MARY	98	177 BEASANT, PETE	81
94 CASLON, D	116	136 BALDING, IA	97	178 ALTERNATIVE RACING	80
94 O'BRIEN, DR/MRS (A)	116	137 GAY, DAVID	96	178 GALE, J	80
96 BOX, P	115	137 LUMLEY, SADIE	96	180 RANSOM, CHRIS	78
96 DERBYSHIRE, A	115	137 MACKINNON, ROGER	96	181 CATRIDGE STUD	77
96 POWELL, DAVID (B)	115	140 HODGKINS, ADRIAN (B)	95	181 HARRIS, NIGEL (B)	77
99 BALDING, EAM	114	140 HYDE, M	95	181 MEARS, GARY	77
99 GAY, SUE	114	140 IRELAND, ANNE (A)	95	181 PLUMBLY, SIMON	77
101 HALLAS, GARY (A)	113	140 MCCREADY, NEVIL SIR	95	185 BROADHURST, R	76
101 MCPHEE, MINA	113	140 METCALFE, P	95	185 DERBYSHIRE, MRS D	76
101 PASCOE, RICHARD	113	145 BROUGHTON, B	94	185 GORDON, SUZIE (A)	76
104 BARBER, H	112	145 BUCKLEY, R	94	188 HARRIS, PAT	75
104 LAMBOURNE, EMMA	112	145 CHARLTON, L (A)	94	189 LUMLEY, BENSON	74
106 ARNOLD, HUGH	111	145 GORDON, SUZIE (B)	94	190 OURY, GERALD	72
106 EVANS, M	111	145 HALL, JULIA	94	191 COPE, CORD (B)	71

191 HIGHAMS, MARK	71	200 WEBSTER, JASON	66	208 MICHAELSON, SOOTY	55
191 NEWBERY, KAREN	71	201 TEAM DEREK	65	209 RANSOM, J M	53
191 PALMER, W	71	202 WINTERBECK MANOR STUD	64	210 HODGKINS, ADRIAN (A)	52
195 HOLISTIC	70	203 OATES, D	62	211 CHARLTON, M (B)	50
195 STRATFORD, KAREN	70	203 PALMER, CLARE	62	211 FLEMING, HECTOR	50
195 WATSON, G	70	205 CLEGG, D & B	60	213 CHARLTON, L (B)	49
198 WALKER, JULIAN	69	206 RANSOM, M	57	214 O'BRIEN DR/MRS (B)	48
199 WILSON, NANETTE	67	207 FOSTER, CHRISTINE	56	215 HARRIS, ELIZABETH	42

TOP SCORING HORSES 2006

OLLIE GEORGE	42	STREETS AHEAD	28
IRONY	34	DRUMMING PARTY (USA)	27
LOCH VERDI	34	KALANKARI	27
DARK MISSILE	33	KINGSHOLM	27

Well done "Ollie" and "Ronnie" and Streets Ahead did well to score 28 as a 2yo.



OLLIE GEORGE - The Top Scorer

LEADING LISTS

ANGELA	AMB	CORD	SHIREE				
KALANKARI	27	SHADE COZY	22	KINGSHOLM	27	CHANTACO	20
GORDONSVILLE	8	TANGARITA	22	BANKNOTE	22	WELSH DRAGON	4
LOCH VERDI	34	ANTIGONI	6	DINGAAN	10	KALANKARI	27
BORDER MUSIC	22	DEEPWATER BAY	18	HOLBECK GHYLL	14	GORDONSVILLE	8
KINGSHOLM	27	LOCH VERDI	34	TANGARITA	22	LOCH VERDI	34
FREE TO AIR	24	GORDONSVILLE	8	GENEROSIA	16	OLLIE GEORGE	42
HOLBECK GHYLL	14	KINGSHOLM	27	COOL STING	20	PINCH OF SALT	6
SEAFLOWER REEF	6	STREETS AHEAD	28	STAR STRIDER	13	BUZBURY RINGS	0
STREETS AHEAD	28	STAR STRIDER	13	SEAFLOWER REEF	6	ROAD TO RECOVERY	0
WHISKEY JUNCTION	11	WATER MILL	10	STREETS AHEAD	28	STAR STRIDER	13
SIRENS GIFT	19	SIRENS GIFT	19	WHISKEY JUNCTION	11	STREETS AHEAD	28
BRIGHT FORECAST	0	TWEED RIVER	0	WATER MILL	10	WHISKEY JUNCTION	11



MELBOURNE CUP • 2006

CLARE BALDING

In the interests of self-improvement (and a week in what I imagined would be sunshine), I accepted an offer from one of the major broadcast channels in Australia to work on the Spring Carnival in Melbourne. There is no equivalent of the BBC in Australia but in terms of professionalism and audience popularity, Channel 7 is about as close as you can get and I was thrilled to be included in their team.

As a broadcaster, I think it is crucial to keep challenging yourself by either doing different events or by working in a different environment where you can learn new skills. It is all too easy to become comfortable in the work you do, to play safe and to suffer from the dreaded disease of complacency, which is reflected in lazy broadcasting. Thus, in a quiet month for our racing coverage over here and with rugby league commitments covered, the BBC agreed to let me go to Melbourne for what was a fascinating experience.

Sports coverage in Australia makes ours look like we're barely interested. Every newspaper (front pages and back), every news bulletin, every radio and TV programme, every shop in the city was obsessed with the Melbourne Cup. The other races may be of higher quality but the Cup is the one that everyone wants to talk about. The microscopic attention does have its negative side, as Kieren Fallon found out when he made

a throwaway comment to the waiting photographers as he rode Yeats back to the quarantine yard.

'How does the Cup winner look, boys?' was splashed across every front page the following day and Fallon was portrayed as arrogance personified because of something he said in jest. As it turned out, Yeats could only finish 7th, two places behind the best of the European trained runners, 200-1 shot Land N'Stars.

As explained to me by Andy Kay, the editor for Channel 7, my job was to report on the foreign invaders and to tell the viewers things they couldn't read in the paper. Given the amount of newspaper coverage, that was going to be tricky but I invested in early mornings down at Sandown Racecourse to see the horses as much as I could.

I hitched a lift with Kieren and Tom Magnier to watch Yeats's final piece of work, which was more useful in terms of information gathering than anything I could have read or studied. Kieren was enjoying the responsibility of effectively training Yeats and the horse looked magnificent. Luckily, I also took a close look at the two Japanese runners Pop Rock and Delta Blues and saw their final work together.

As I watched Delta Blues being scrubbed along, his work rider brandishing the whip as he strained to keep tabs on Pop Rock, I thought the main Japanese

contender was obvious. I said as much during the preview programme on the Sunday before the Cup and I also pretty much dismissed the chances of Land N'Stars and Glistening, while talking up Geordieland (who broke a blood vessel in the race and finished down the field).

When it came to the day itself, I was in the studio for the length of the 'International Hour' which is the part of the programme that is fed to the whole world. By that point, I had decided that the Japanese would definitely win the Cup so I selected Pop Rock but managed to say on air that Delta Blues was good value at 18-1 on the TAB. Delta Blues went on to beat Pop Rock in a photo finish in one of the most exciting race finishes I have ever seen. Sometimes, you get very lucky.

As an investigative trip, it was thoroughly worthwhile. The main Channel 7 racing presenter, Bruce McAvaney, is a thorough professional and could not have been more helpful. We met for coffee before the first of my four days work and he talked me through every aspect of the meeting and the programme. He was encouraging, supportive, incredibly knowledgeable and a very generous presenter on air. Bruce covers a range of sports for TV and radio as a presenter and a commentator and would be one of the best I have seen in the world. It was an honour to have worked alongside him and he made me vow that if ever we have a foreign reporter join our team, I will try to be as accommodating.

The gaps between races are longer than ours so there is more opportunity for fashion and celebrity content and they make the most of it. With 22 on-screen 'talent' (presenters, reporters, analysts) the team is massive. Much bigger than our Grand National or Royal Ascot team with each individual required to do a very specific and sometimes quite small job.

The racing experts – Bruce, Richard Freedman (brother of trainer Lee) and Simon Marshall (ex-jockey) stay in the studio throughout. They are excellent in terms of their knowledge but in my opinion, it is a shame to stay enclosed. I think part of the joy of the job is seeing the horses up close, talking to the people involved and drinking in the atmosphere of the event.

There is big event feel to every day of the Carnival, which consists of four days of racing spread out over



Clare with FREE TO AIR

a week, with days in between for people and horses to recover from their hangovers and run again! I was amazed by the crowd on the first Saturday for Derby Day. Just short of 130,000 people travelled to Flemington and all of them seemed to be able to buy a drink and place a bet. The Derby winner, Efficient, came from an impossible position to win impressively and may be on course for Royal Ascot next year.

The only disappointment was the weather, which was bloody freezing for most of the week - until the day I left when the sun shone on the Oaks Day crowd, largely made up of women wearing hats and not a lot else. Over the week, more than 400,000 people attended the races and whether they saw a horse or not, they all contributed to the most incredible race meeting in the world. It is so much fun to be somewhere that you know people are interested and enthusiastic about the horses, the jockeys and everything to do with the races. I have been invited back next year and will jump at the chance if it fits in with BBC commitments.

As for having a runner in the Cup, which would be the most fabulous experience for any owner, I have reported back to Andrew that there is a considerable benefit to getting there in time to have a run in the Caulfield Cup or one of the other prep races. Oh, and don't say 'how does the Cup winner look, boys!' ■

IT'S A TECHNICAL KNOCK OUT...

Anna Lisa Balding



He promised he would never fight again, and I thought, after four days of deafness following the last fight, he would keep to his word, how wrong I was!

On Sunday 29th August, he took to the ring again, three rounds of pounding beckoned, but what could I say, he was fighting for Motor Neurone Disease, a charity close to my heart, I just had to bite my lip and support him all the way.

He trained hard (I even saw he had sneaked his training gloves into his suitcase to Saratoga for the sales) and was determined to be victorious this time. Sponsored by Betfair, he entered the ring sporting their blue and white corporate colours from top to bottom, marching in to his chosen theme tune, Born Slippy. Closely followed by his corner man, aka, his assistant, Chris Bonner. Chris had managed to psyche him into an amazingly vicious, determined and confident frame of mind, so much so, when I went up to wish him luck in the big fight, I was pushed away.

His opponent, David Mackinnon, General Manager of Windsor Racecourse, followed him into the ring, looking terrified, shaking and a puny two stone lighter than Andrew.





I stood with his wife, Anna Louise, and watched as my husband almost pummelled her husband to the floor on several occasions. I apologised for every punch thrown, as blood appeared from David's mouth, nose etc, all whilst Andrew looked to love it, Bonner screaming instructions into his ear at round breaks, (this time he actually listened, as apposed to the last time when he ignored his father!! The ref finally rang the bell after a long three minutes, he announced that Andrew had won through a technical knock out, he was victorious and boy was he pleased with himself.

The wonderful news was that he raised £10,000 for Motor Neurone Disease which was fantastic. I hope his boxing career is over, he has left the ring victorious and his gloves will now remain in the black netting bag hanging in our bedroom – he assures me, he will not go back on his word. ■

If anyone would like to give a donation to Motor Neurone Disease in honour of Andrew's victory, it certainly isn't too late and any cheques would be hugely appreciated; please make cheques out to Motor Neurone Disease Association, and send to Anna Lisa Balding, Wroughton House, Kingsclere, Newbury, Berks. RG20 5PY.

A GORGEOUS PAIR! – that was the verdict of the judges at the Newbury Show 2006. They chose Farmer Balding's magnificent rams as best in show in the commercial division. However even I.A.B. can not try and claim the credit for the appearance of these two fine beasts as the "real" farmer is none other than famed pigeon trainer/gallop man – Brian Coventry. Many congratulations Brian!



Happy New Year

