

MANOR HOUSE

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Roman Dragon winning
The Hawar Cup in Bahrain



Dragon slays his rivals in Bahrain

ROMAN Dragon bagged the biggest pot of his career when winning in Bahrain last Friday.

Having disappointed on his first two starts in the Middle East, the five-year-old sprinter returned to form with a vengeance to land The Hawar Cup and earn his delighted owners, Nick Hughes and Michael Owen, almost £40,000 in prize money.

Ridden by Ebrahim Nader, Roman Dragon came with a powerful late run in the 6f handicap to beat John and Sean Quinn's Brazen Bolt by half a length.

Up until Friday, all five of Roman Dragon's career victories had come at



Roman Dragon's thrilled owners

Chester; moreover, the son of Heeraat had failed to fire on his first two outings in the Bahrain Turf Series. However, connections elected to roll the dice one more time and were rewarded handsomely for their perseverance.

"We're absolutely delighted. He has got speed to burn but we often think he's better round a turning track than a straight track, so today is a lovely surprise," said Michael after the race.

"We thought beforehand Box To Box [unplaced earlier in the day] would be in the first three and this horse [Roman Dragon] would be in the last three, but it happened the other way round!

"It's my first time here and I am really enjoying it. My old boss, Sir Alex Ferguson, was stood here not so long ago having won the big race, the Bahrain International Trophy, so it's clearly a lucky spot."

Top sprinter Brad retired

BRAD The Brief has been retired after winning eight of his 26 races and more than £170,000 in prize money.

Andrew Black's home-bred sprinter, who scored on his racecourse debut at Bath in 2019, won the Group 3 Prix de Seine-et-Oise at Chantilly in 2020 and the Group 2 Greenland Stakes at the Curragh in 2022.

"Brad enjoyed a fantastic career, but his time had come," reflected Hugo.

"He's a sweet horse – an absolute saint. It's only a shame that he didn't win for us last year and have the opportunity to bow out on a high."

While MHS has bid a fond farewell to Brad The Brief, Hugo sent out Andrew's Camelot filly, Kitteridge, to finish second on her first start in a Chelmsford novice stakes last month.

MHS duo on Nick's sofa

HUGO and Michael Owen took centre stage in a recent edition of *Luck on Sunday*.

The MHS duo were Nick Luck's guests on the show broadcast on the morning of Sunday, January 21.

Hugo and Michael shared their thoughts on racing's wellbeing and spoke at length about MHS.

"We've never had demand like it," said Michael. "We're going to be training 50 two-year-olds this year alone."

"Of course, racing is struggling in certain areas but at Manor House we've got more people wanting to get involved than ever before."

● You can catch up with the MHS duo's appearance [here](#).



Stenton Glider third on her Dubai debut



Stenton Glider in action

STENTON Glider performed with credit on her first start in Dubai last month.

The four-year-old filly earned owners Jane Mairs and son Tom almost £20,000 when finishing third in the Group 2 Cape Verdi at Meydan on January 19.

Last year's German 1000 Guineas runner-up had every chance at the two-furlong pole but could not withhold the strong finish of Silver Lady and English Rose.

Nevertheless, on her first start since finishing down the

field in a Haydock Listed race in August, Stenton Glider battled on bravely to resist the late challenge of Nibras Angel and earn herself a podium finish.

"Stenton Glider ran super. I was absolutely delighted with her," said Hugo. "What's more, it was her first run in a long time and we hadn't been desperately hard on her going into the race so she should really come forward for the run."

Stenton Glider's next appearance is likely to be in the Group 2 Balanchine on February 23.

Seagulls star is now an owner with MHS

BRIGHTON and Hove Albion footballer Billy Gilmour and some of his teammates have joined the ranks of owners at MHS.

Billy and his pals have invested in the two-year-olds Seagolazo, Seagull's Eleven, and The Flying Seagull who will run in silks similar to Brighton's home kit.



Billy Gilmour

Billy, who joined Brighton in September 2023, visited MHS last month to see the three juveniles in which he has an interest.

Another long price winner for Derek

WHILE Sweet Talkin Sue's 66-1 success at Wolverhampton last month might have come as a shock to many, her owner Derek Passant may have been rather less surprised.

For Derek is no

stranger to long-priced winners – his three-year-old gelding Charlie D went off at 100-1 when winning a 1m4f novice stakes for MHS, under Paddy Pilley, at Wolverhampton in August 2018.

Gold Cup day event promises to be a lot of fun

MHS is looking forward to welcoming owners old and new for the yard's annual Cheltenham Gold Cup Day extravaganza on Friday, March 15.

Proceedings will get underway at 10am, with a tour of the yard and gallops, before a drinks reception and lunch between midday and 1pm.

The seven-race card from



Hugo and Michael at MHS

Pretbury Park kicks off with the JCB Triumph Hurdle at 1.30pm, with the big race, the Boodles

Cheltenham Gold Cup, due off at 3.30pm, and the Martin Pipe Conditional Jockeys' Handicap Hurdle which brings down the curtain on the 2024 Festival off two hours later at 5.30pm.

● It would be very much appreciated if anyone who's received an invitation and hasn't yet responded were to do so before Friday, March 8.

JANUARY JOY



Swordstick winning on his racecourse debut at Southwell

Yard begins year in sparkling form

MANOR House Stables has made a sparkling start to 2024 with eight winners before the end of January.

As reported in the previous edition of *Manor House Monthly*, Noltan Cross set the ball rolling when successful at Southwell just five days into the new year and a second winner of 2024 followed just 35 minutes later when It's Not Risky bagged the very next race at the Nottinghamshire venue.

And the three-year-old son of Modify, who is owned by Derek Horrock's Sustainable Building Services and Michael Owen, followed up when dropped back in trip to take a 1m1½f handicap at Wolverhampton 10 days later. Jason Hart was in the saddle, as he had been for the Showcasing



Prince Of Zenda

gelding's previous victory.

In between It's Not Risky's two victories, Sweet Talkin Sue and Prince Of Zenda provided MHS with its third and fourth winners of the month.

The former sprang a big surprise under Hayley Turner having been sent off the 66-1 outsider of seven in a 1m½f handicap at Wolverhampton on January 14.

Ross Coakley was aboard Prince Of Zenda when the Middleham Park Racing four-year-old took a 6f Lingfield handicap

the following day, and the four-year-old son of Kingman made it back-to-back victories when sluicing up in another 6f handicap, this time at Newcastle, on January 27. On this occasion, 5lb claimer Brandon Wilkie was in the saddle.

Ross was also aboard for the yard's seventh success of the month, which came courtesy of Havanarama, in a 7f Kempton handicap on January 17. It was a first victory, at the fifth attempt, for the Havana Grey gelding who is owned by Tony Ford and Michael Owen.

And six days later, Harry Davies bagged his first winner for MHS this year when partnering the three-year-old Swordstick to victory for owners More Turf Racing on his racecourse debut in a 1m maiden at Southwell.

THE Manor House Stables trip to the legendary Coolmore Stud in County Tipperary, Ireland, was given a ringing endorsement by all those who attended.

Hugo, Michael Owen, and 10 others, including former footballers Steve McManaman and Owen Hargreaves, visited what is widely renowned as the world's biggest, and best, thoroughbred racehorse breeding operation at the end of last month.

Owned by the Magnier family and situated in the heart of the Golden Vale on over 7,000 prime acres of Ireland's finest limestone land, Coolmore provides the perfect environment for breeding thoroughbreds.

The MHS party ventured through the hallowed gates of Coolmore, where they learnt about the farm's incredible history and racing legacy while getting up close and personal with their champion stallions.

As well as a tour of the stud, they also enjoyed a visit to its museum, a parade of stallions, and a three-course lunch at Mickey Ryan's in nearby Fethard.

"It was magnificent," enthused Hugo. "I've never been there before but have always wanted to go and it didn't disappoint."

"It was fascinating to see the place, lovely to see the stallions



The Manor House Party at the legendary Coolmore Stud

Coolmore trip proves big success

and we were looked after unbelievably well by Coolmore. It was a really fantastic day, tremendous, and everyone had a wonderful time.

"Unfortunately, I had to forego a night out in Dublin with the rest of the party because I want-

ed to be back in the yard the next morning, so I'm not party to what might, or might not, have happened there!"

• *Keep an eye out in future editions of Manor House Monthly for details of more trips we're planning over the coming months.*

MEET THE TEAM

Mollie's love of speed led to career in racing



Racing groom Mollie Winney leading

RACING groom Mollie Winney joined the team at MHS in the summer of 2023.

Mollie, who grew up in Middlebrough, previously worked for trainer Nigel Tinkler in Malton, North Yorkshire.

"My mum worked in racing, and I always liked going fast on my ponies," joked the Teesider when quizzed on how her interest in racing had come about.

Asked to name her favourite horse in the yard, Mollie said she couldn't choose

between the four-year-old Souffionne, who won at Newcastle in November, and the five-year-old Victoria Falls, who won three times for MHS during the course of 2023.

In her spare time, Mollie enjoys watching the racing on TV, and her favourite food is shepherd's pie.

If she was offered an all-expenses paid trip anywhere in the world, Mollie says she would jump at the chance to visit Australia.

HUGO PALMER

I'm thrilled with the start we've made to the 2024 campaign

IM thrilled with how the yard has begun the year. As I said last month, it's always a relief to get up and running, so I was delighted when Noltan Cross provided us with our first winner of 2024 when scoring at Southwell just five days into the new year.

What is more, we enjoyed seven further domestic successes before the end of the month, while Roman Dragon bagged a valuable pot in Bahrain last Friday. While it would have been lovely to have reached double figures before the end of January, we've more than matched the very decent start we made last year so we have to be happy.

Fortunately, the horses seem to be in rude health and I'd like to think we can kick on and add a few more to our total before the turf season gets under way in mid March. We had seven winners last January, before we eased off a bit and gave some of the horses a break, but this time around I think we'll look to keep a few more on the go.

Certainly, these are exciting times at MHS.



Lots of new owners have come on board over recent months, as a result of which we should have around 120 horses in training, which is 10 or 15 more than last year. And with 50-plus two-year-olds broken in and cantering, you can't help but dream of what might be!

MICHAEL and I thoroughly enjoyed appearing on a recent episode of *Luck on Sunday*.

It's something that we'd been trying to tee up for a little while but aligning everyone's diaries proved easier said than done.

Despite his wealth of broadcasting experience, Michael didn't volunteer any tips in advance of our appearance, though I do recall him once telling me he thought his best punditry came 'after a good lunch'. Unfortunately, we

had to be at the Racing UK studio at the crack of dawn so that wasn't a whole lot of help on this occasion!

In any case, while a career in front of the camera might not be beckoning, I'd like to think I did okay. And regardless of my performance, it was fantastic to have the opportunity to talk about all the exciting things going on at Manor House and showcase the yard. After all, while we might have 120-odd horses in training this year we can always find room for a few more!

I WAS delighted we were able to provide 5lb claimer Brandon Wilkie with a winner when Prince Of Zenda was successful at Newcastle recently.

It's always nice to be able to give up-and-coming young jockeys opportunities and Brandon, who is based with Karl Burke, is someone who's impressed me greatly over recent months.

Moving forward, we'll continue to make good use of Ross Coakley, Harry Davies, and Jason Hart - all of whom have ridden winners for MHS already this year - while we'll also look to utilise James Doyle, Tom Marquand, and Oisín Murphy as and when they become available.

At the same time, it's a bit of a moveable feast as inevitably there will be occasions when all our 'go-to jockeys' are otherwise engaged and we'll have no option but to look elsewhere.



Test yourself on 2023 campaign



One of three horses to score for the Gene Genies in 2023

WITH the 2024 season now fully up and running, we've devised 12 fiendishly difficult questions to test your knowledge of the yard's 2023 campaign.

- [1] Which horse was MHS's leading domestic moneyspinner in 2023?
- [2] Name the two MHS horses which won three times in 2023.
- [3] Who was the winning-most jockey for MHS in 2023 with 10 winners?
- [4] Which jockey boasted a 100 per cent record riding for MHS in 2023?
- [5] Which two horses won over-



Richard Kingscote

seas races for MHS in 2023?

- [6] Oisin Murphy was aboard one of those two overseas winners, but who rode the other one?
- [7] Which horse provided MHS with its first winner under National Hunt rules when scoring at Doncaster in December?
- [8] Which three horses did Hugo

train to win for Middleham Park Racing in 2023?

[9] On which horse did former stable jockey Richard Kingscote ride his first winner for MHS in more than a year?

[10] Three horses carried the turquoise and blue silks of the Gene Genies to success in 2023. Name any one of them.

[11] At which course did MHS have the most winners in 2023?

[12] Which MHS stalwart won a Listed race at Nottingham in April of last year?

● Look out for the answers in the February edition of *Manor House Monthly*.

Perfect time to join Michael's racing club



Club members in the paddock at Chester

WITH the 2024 season about to get into full swing, now is the perfect time to think about joining the Michael Owen Racing Club.

All the more so when you consider He's A Gentleman has scored twice since being recruited to the club at the end of September and is expected to remain busy on the all-weather over the winter.

In addition, the club's blue and silver silks are also

sported by Pearly Star, who was on the scoresheet at Chester in June, and the as-yet-unraced filly Rose Donnelly.

It costs just £95 a year to join the club with benefits including a digital welcome pack, invitations to yard visits, and entry into a ballot for complementary owners & trainer badges every time one of the club's horses is in action.

● Find out more about the racing club and how to join [here](#).

Opportunity to join Manor House team

MANOR House Stables has a vacancy for an assistant groundsman.

A positive, self-motivated individual is sought to be responsible for general upkeep and maintenance at MHS.

The role, which may suit a rider or yardman looking for some variety, requires a full, clean driving licence.

● Email info@manor-housestables.com or call 01948 820485 for further details.

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