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TRC



A Ferrari in the slow lane

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Including feature races on 26 February

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Obaiya Arabian Classic G2 (Purebred Arabians)	4yo+	2000m	Dirt	\$2m
Saudi Derby G3	3yo	1600m	Dirt	\$1.5m
Riyadh Dirt Sprint G3	3yo+	1200m	Dirt	\$1.5m
1351 Turf Sprint G3	4yo+	1351m	Turf	\$1.5m
Neom Turf Cup G3	4yo+	2100m	Turf	\$1.5m

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He was maybe the fastest horse in the world *but he's definitely in the slow lane now*

Kristen Manning | February 03, 2021

Casey Bruce putting Chautauqua through his paces. "He is going to make a lovely show horse," she says. Photos: Kristen Manning and Vin Lowe



The dressage lesson, one of the three half-hour or so sessions he undertakes each week, has gone well. His rider leans across his neck and gives him an affectionate scratch as she praises him. “Good boy, lovely boy.”

He stands regally as he recovers from his work. There is an undoubtable presence to this horse, an aura that stems not only from his eye-catching looks and extreme power but also from his supreme intelligence.

This is a horse who knows what is being asked of him, who learns quickly, who adapts to a regime that is in every way the polar opposite of what he was bred to do, what generations of his ancestors instilled into every fibre of his being.

The signs he must pick up on are subtle, almost invisible to onlookers. A gentle squeeze from the lower leg here, a slight twinge on the reins there. The horse and his rider must be one.

And both must be committed. Even when the temptation to do something totally different is so strong.

“Do you know how hard it is,” Casey Bruce asked, “to sit on this horse and ask him to take things slowly? It is like being handed the keys to a Ferrari and being told to stick to 40km an hour.”

Casey is patient; slow and steady on a horse who, at the peak of his powers, could cover 200 metres in just a tick over ten seconds.

Except of course, when he chose not to.

The unique, frustrating, admirable, difficult, brilliant horse that is Chautauqua.

When the champion sprinter fondly known as Sharky took his stellar local form (at that time four G1 victories at Flemington, Randwick and Moonee Valley) onto the international stage at Sha Tin - contesting the 2016 Chairman's Sprint Prize - he recorded a win so remarkable, so breathtaking that all subsequent fast-finishing victories are compared to it.

In a sign of things to come, the big grey was noticeably slowly away and, from the get-go, was chasing. Fellow Australian Buffering helped set up a frantic pace, Chautauqua spotting the leaders a dozen lengths.

Heading for home, Chautauqua was pushed wide, so much so that at the

380m mark he disappeared. It was not until there was 190m to go that a grey nose appeared at the edge of the screen, though in the meantime race caller Brett Davis was keeping a close eye on him.

“And now Berry unleashes Chautauqua to the middle part of the track.”

There were other horses of course, well credentialed rivals from around the world. But Australians were watching only one horse, hearing only one name ...

“Chautauqua is winding up.”

“Chautauqua's still coming.”

“Chautauqua, here he comes, the thunder down under!”

“Chautauqua raced to the lead. What a champion!”

An average of 10.98 seconds for each 200m split. Low-flying.

The (very) late show - but Tommy Berry is already beginning to enjoy the moment as Chautauqua hits the line in the 2017 TJ Smith at Randwick



Jockey Tommy Berry described him as “a very special horse”, but the best quote of the day came from Brett Prebble, who rode the runner-up, Lucky Bubbles ... “Who brought that rocket here? I gave my horse a peach of a ride and he went terrific, but one just sailed past us!”

And it was not a one-off, fluke performance. Each of Chautauqua’s wins were barnstormers, none more so than his historic third consecutive G1 TJ Smith Stakes victory at Randwick in April 2017 *(featured on TRC as one of seven great performances around the world to mark this website’s seventh birthday)*.

Again at the rear, again chasing, again in a seemingly impossible position ... 200m to go and only three behind him. Another broadcaster with awe in his voice as he called, this time Darren Flindell ...

“Chautauqua very late.”

“Can he do it?”

“Chautauqua, he’s flying ... yes, there’s history!”

“Tell me that is not one of the greatest moments here at Randwick.”

It was to be the crowning moment of a magnificent racing career, one that came to an end on Chautauqua’s terms. He kept working well, kept pleasing connections and riders, but ...

After a late scratching at the gates in the 2017 G1 Manikato Stakes at Moonee Valley, Chautauqua decided that racing was no longer for him. He would behave gentlemanly, he’d walk into the barriers freely and easily. But when the gates opened, he just didn’t want to go.

The image of Chautauqua standing in the stalls in numerous trials (including one at Moonee Valley on Moir Stakes night when it was thought he could be fooled into thinking it was a race) is one that sticks in the memory of racegoers everywhere.



The racehorse who said no.

We will never really know why Chautauqua decided to retire himself. Horses are creatures of flight, which is why racing works. For one to stand so still, to display no flamboyant emotion as all of those around him charge ... this was a horse overcoming all instincts. He was ignoring the innate, overriding it with calm thought, a rational intelligence.

It is an understanding that places Chautauqua in good stead for his second career. Though the re-training process is by no means a simple one. This is a big, strong Thoroughbred who was trained from day one to convert his power into speed. Now he is learning to live life in a much slower lane.

A picturesque farm 60km outside Melbourne has been Chautauqua’s home for the last six months. Before that he lived with the renowned and popular racing commentator and dedicated horseman Rob Gaylard, the horse a passion project for him and daughter Casey Bruce.

Coach Leigh Dunstan with Chautauqua. “I have always felt I have been in the presence of royalty,” he says

When Rob passed away in July last year, a void was created. “There is one less member in Chautauqua’s team,” she said sadly, though of course Rob meant so much more to her.

But with Chautauqua such a big part of Casey’s life, Rob is always by her side. A bond strengthened by horses, especially this one, is difficult to sever.

Rob was Chautauqua and Casey’s trainer, that role now undertaken by the highly respected coach Leigh Dunstan, who Casey fondly describes as “the instructor with the most!”

Involved with horses throughout his life - attending his first Royal Melbourne Show in 1966 - Leigh has instructed at pony clubs for decades. He has seen many a talented young rider take the next step into an equestrian life, such as successful jockey Patrick Moloney, whom he described as “a gifted show rider”.

*“Chautauqua very late... Can he do it?...
Chautauqua, he’s flying ... yes, there’s history!”*



“Most of the good dressage and show riders start in pony club,” he said.

Such as an 8-year-old Casey Bruce, who also went onto a professional riding career, winning 219 races in Victoria and Tasmania. Her first ride was in April 1999 on Earlwood Manor for her master, Peter Corrigan, her first winner coming at her ninth ride - and another three from her next 17.

Her final ride came at Seymour in September 2015, a win aboard the Bryan Maher-trained Runsati. “I was riding in peak form, but had to retire as I was 12 weeks pregnant.”

She misses the rush of it all, but another passion fulfills her thrill-seeking desires. She is a proud owner of a treasure passed down through the family - a de Havilland DHC-1 Chipmunk, an impressive 1952 version of the Canadian-designed aircraft. How fortunate it is that the man she met and fell for just happens to be a pilot.

And it was flying over the Romsey/Kerrie area north of Melbourne one day that Casey spied a very attractive property. She made enquiries, discovering that the owner, Hannah Martin, was a good friend of one of Chautauqua's track riders; it seemed it was meant to be.

Now Chautauqua's home base, it is a busy working stud farm. There was plenty happening on the day of our visit; a whipper snipper (known as a 'trimmer' or 'line trimmer' in some other countries) expelling its intrusive

Display of affectionate: Chautauqua with Casey Bruce

noise, a child running about - making usual youngster sounds. Other horses whinnied and two strangers - one with a notepad and one with a camera - were watching his every move.

None of this bothered Chautauqua much, though at one stage he'd had enough of the whipper snipper, briefly letting his displeasure show. But it doesn't take much for Casey to pick up on his thoughts and it was off with the machinery.

“Whoa buddy,” Casey whispered, and Chautauqua was again content.

There is plenty happening in Chautauqua's life at this stage. He is being prepared for his first quiet look at a show, this one unannounced so that he can have a relaxed introduction to this new world.

He isn't too keen on floats - there have been challenges getting him aboard. He'd just had a week off after an incident saw him take skin off the top of his head; the result of an argument with one truck that he did not take to.

“He actually went bonkers,” Casey said. “He had a proper spac attack!”

Soothing words

There is no doubt, she added, that Chautauqua suffers from a degree of claustrophobia, not an uncommon trait in an animal evolved to freely roam.

Talks are underway with an English float company regarding the use of a side loader, Casey confident it will prove more to his liking.

Ear plugs are being introduced to Chautauqua. They help to filter the outside world. They are like little soft golf balls. They go in quite easily, though removing them after his lesson proved more challenging, Casey using a stool to get closer to the big boy's head. Calm patting and soothing words ... “are you my best friend?” Casey cooed ... and out they came.

And then it was time for the brushing, something Chautauqua tolerates rather than enjoys. But he knows the attention being bestowed upon him comes from a good place ... “I can't just put you out in the paddock without paying any attention to you,” Casey whispers to him.

He rewards her with a display of affection. He “has a thing for hair” and gently nuzzles Casey's head. For a few minutes, this writer enjoys a career highlight as Chautauqua deigns to share some of his love ... he placed his head on my shoulder and blew gently into my ear. Could it be that this arrogant performer is actually a big softie at heart?

Chautauqua had just enjoyed a two-part lesson, firstly inside a massive indoor arena with dust swirling around his feet and then outside in a smaller yard. It takes a keen eye to notice just how hard Casey and he are working as both take it so much in stride.

Centre of attention

Leigh gives gentle instruction, insightful and encouraging. His pride in rider and horse is apparent; this is a man who loves his job. Well, it is more of a calling than a job.

“I have worked with some lovely horses over the years,” he said, “but none quite like this fellow. Like all horses, he likes a routine, but he is a very sensitive horse, highly intelligent and determined. If he doesn't like something, he cannot be forced to do it.”

But Chautauqua is a horse who can learn, and when he does pick up on something new - "he does it well".

Eventually! It took a little while for Chautauqua to really "make up his mind as to whether he liked dressage or not," Leigh laughed, "but he seems to be enjoying his life now."

Which is not really surprising. Dressage horses are, after all, inclined to be show-offs, and Chautauqua is used to being in the public eye, to being the centre of attention.

And he has that aura."I have always felt I have been in the presence of royalty," Leigh said while Casey noted, "He is a peacock, a supreme athlete and he knows it."

'He loves his work'

How would Chautauqua have fared with quiet retirement in a paddock? "That would be cruel for a horse like him," Leigh said. "He enjoys people's company and he likes to learn. It is just a matter of not making too big of an issue of anything."

The paddock he does spend his downtime in is a good size, though not massive, everyone mindful that a long stretch of grassy land may prove just too tempting for him. "He might just take off," Casey said, noting, "When he gets up speed, it is a terrifying sight."

Fortunately, however, Chautauqua is for the most part quiet, content with his lot. "He loves his work," Casey said. "You can see that his ears are pricked for most of the time."

Back into his yard, Chautauqua settled quickly. He is a renowned fussy eater but is content to nibble on grass, noticeably unperturbed by a persistent willy wagtail who was determined to become his friend, fluttering about his head.

He does enjoy the company of other animals, though - well some! He recently spied a neighbour's goat and was unimpressed. But a delightful little black pony, a rescue by the name of Bo-Bo is a treasured companion. "They are best mates," Casey said.

"There was one day when something here spooked him and he decided he really didn't like this place after all. But Bo-Bo calmed him right down."



Sharing the stress

There have been times when Chautauqua has been aloof. He certainly was for some time after first coming into Casey's life. She had to work hard over months to gain his trust, his affection.

But deep down there is love in his heart and he made room in it for Casey. You can see it in their every movement together - she asks questions of him, he answers ... and the other way around. When he is annoyed or upset, it is she from whom he seeks comfort.

There is some pressure on Casey and Leigh, Chautauqua being as popular as he is. But the horse comes first, they - and he - won't be rushed. Any stress felt is shared. "Leigh is a good punching-bag," Casey joked.

She has had to be exceptionally patient, Chautauqua not unlike a gifted student. There are flaws that come with genius. "He will be the death of me," said Casey, quick to add, "But I do so love this guy!"

Fortunately time is not an enemy. "He is still very much in his prime," Leigh said, confident that Chautauqua can enjoy a few years in the dressage spotlight. And he is excited about the grey's prospects. "He is going to make a lovely show horse."

'The people's horse'

Chautauqua remains in the ownership of his racing connections, who, led by Rupert Legh, still play an active role in Chautauqua's life and well-being,

Show debut: Chautauqua and Casey Bruce during the 'fashions on the field' event on Sunday

though this is not a horse who can really be 'owned' by anyone.

He is, says Casey, very much 'the people's horse'. "And we are all very comfortable with that. He is a horse to be shared."

The Garryowen, the Royal Melbourne Show's famed annual prestige event, is the dream Casey has for Chautauqua, another historic contest - the Colonel AV Pope Cup - also an ambition. Just to be competing, Casey said, would be a lifetime highlight.

"Winning or finishing last, it won't matter," she said. "Just to be there, that will be such an achievement for this horse."

A horse, she says who "knows he is special".

And we all know it too.

Chautauqua competed at his first show on Sunday (January 31), taking part in two competitions. In the first he finished fourth and in the second, a 'fashions on the field' event, he was second. Casey was delighted with how the popular grey (who attracted more attention than the winners) handled his first big day out in his new career.



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Has *Bob Baffert* been hard done by?

Nicholas Godfrey | June 10, 2021

After one of the most memorable days in the history of Godolphin with an unprecedented transatlantic Classic double, few things would give me greater pleasure than to reflect on the victories of Adayar at Epsom and Essential Quality at Belmont Park.



Bob Baffert: There has been a nasty smell emanating from his barn for at least the last couple of years. Photo: Susie Raisher/NYRA.com

After all, it takes something for a fine G1 1-2 from Charlie Appleby's Dubai stars Althiqa and Summer Romance to be forced into second billing, but to win two such historic races within about eight hours of each other in Britain and the U.S. was momentous indeed.

But, as wonderful as all this was, it would be remiss of me to ignore the elephant in the U.S. racing room – Bob Baffert and the impending DQ of Kentucky Derby winner Medina Spirit now that the split sample has also come back positive for the corticosteroid betamethasone.

As a result, Baffert is currently banned from all New York's main tracks – no Belmont, Saratoga or Aqueduct – and, perhaps even more damaging, one of the most garlanded trainers in the history of the sport will not be able to add to his Kentucky Derby tally until 2024 at the earliest after he was banned from racing and training at Churchill Downs and any of the tracks it owns for two years.

Of course, this may well run and run, with a lengthy appeals procedure and due legal process almost a certainty. There is a precedent: In 1968, Dancer's Image beat the favourite Forward Pass at Churchill Downs before post-race analysis revealed traces of the banned substance phenylbutazone in the winner's urine. It wasn't until April 1972 that the courts had their final say and m'learned friends formally ratified Forward Pass as the 1968 Derby winner.

Swingeing ban

Unless Medina Spirit's connections go gentle into that good night – and of course initial indications suggest quite the reverse, it will probably be some time before the Brad Cox-trained Mandaloun gets his belated roses.

Frankly, it gives me no pleasure whatsoever to contemplate two years without arguably the most recognisable face in the racing world being barred from U.S. racing's main stages, and, given the negligible amounts of a non-performance-enhancing drug involved in the probable Kentucky Derby DQ, it is a swingeing ban.

Make no mistake, it could end a legendary career. He is able to function at his home base in California, where Santa Anita and Del Mar have not reciprocated the ban, but taking away the nation's other main circuits and its most historic races leaves the Baffert operation seriously denuded.

Truth is, Baffert may conceivably have had a point in his emotional outburst about how these trace threshold levels of otherwise legal substances are so small they hardly matter.

That said, I am bending over backwards to some degree, and Baffert's self-justifying stance flies in the face of the prevailing mood amid the introduction of the Horse Racing Safety and Integrity Act in the U.S.

So please be clear on this – I'm not saying he is justified, but I am saying this is not about a systemic attempt to cheat via the sort of designer drugs at the centre of the FBI investigation involving Maximum Security's disgraced trainer Jason Servis and Florida-based Jorge Navarro.

GALLOP

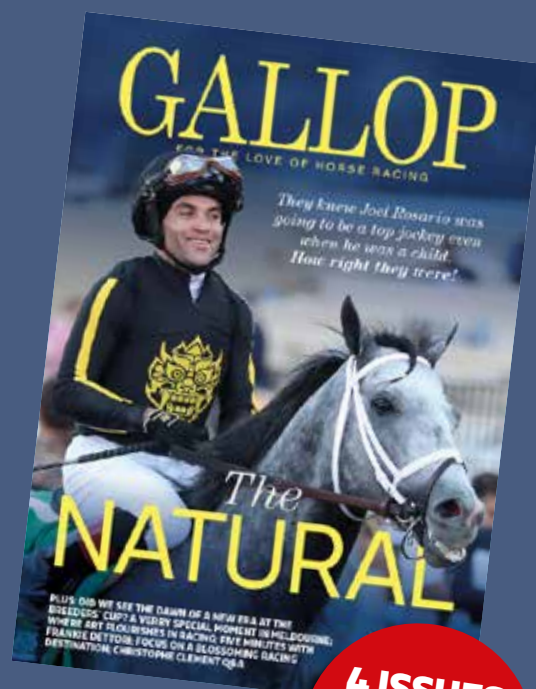
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*“I want to have a positive influence on the sport of horseracing...
Horses have been my life and I owe everything to them and the
tremendous sport in which I have been so fortunate to be involved.
We can always do better, and that is my goal.”*

Baffert's transgression, though, minor as it seems in comparison, comes in the wake of a doping scandal that has rocked the U.S. racing community to its very core. Understandably, the mood is zero-tolerance – and then here comes Uncle Bob, caught on the wrong side of the rules on racing's biggest occasion. It is hardly what the sport needs, and heaped upon real evidence of systemic cheating elsewhere, it doesn't exactly look good in image terms.

Listen to Churchill Downs CEO Bill Carstanjen. “Mr Baffert's record of testing failures threatens public confidence in Thoroughbred racing and the reputation of the Kentucky Derby,” he said. “Given these repeated failures over the last year, including the increasingly extraordinary explanations, we firmly believe that asserting our rights to impose these measures is our duty and responsibility.”

Yet is Baffert being hard done by? Maybe, were this a one-off. A legal ointment used to treat equine dermatitis (and arthritis) has lingered in the system too long; an ‘overage’, in ungrammatical common parlance, for a commonly used steroidal treatment banned on raceday for trace amounts.

Embarrassing list of offences

So Medina Spirit is out, and a Hall of Fame trainer's reputation bites the Kentucky dust. This is not industrial-scale doping for corrupt advantage.

It is, though, negligence from a trainer who has admitted he needs to do better. It is also not anything like an isolated occurrence, because Baffert has an embarrassing list of other offences (and excuses) to be taken into consideration.

There has been a nasty smell emanating from Baffert's barn for at least the last couple of years. Let's recap:

- In April 2018, Justify failed a drug test for scopolamine after winning the Santa Anita Derby before his Triple Crown; amid claims the test had been hushed up, news did not emerge until September that year. The cases were finally dropped a year later, with Justify and six other horses (including G1-winning stablemate Hoppertunity) from various barns found to have ingested adulterated feed, cross-contaminated via wild-growing jimson weed).
- Arkansas Derby winner Charlatan and star filly Gamine were initially disqualified after winning at Oaklawn in May 2020, testing positive for lidocaine, used to alleviate pain. Cross-contamination was blamed, the horses having been innocently exposed to the substance via Baffert's top assistant Jimmy Barnes using a patch for human back pain. The DQs were overturned in April this year but Baffert was still fined \$10,000.
- Merneith tested positive for dextrophan after finishing second in a claimer at Del Mar in July 2020. Baffert appealed, saying contamination by cough syrup (Dayquil and Nyquil, to be specific) contained in an employee's urine, said employee having urinated into hay subsequently ingested by Merneith.
- Gamine failed a drugs test after coming third in last year's Kentucky Oaks in September. This, like Medina Spirit, was anti-inflammatory medication betamethasone.

Baffert may have railed wildly against ‘cancel culture’ after news of Medina Spirit's positive test broke – but, as they say, the optics don't look good.

Think Team Sky in the besmirched world of professional cycling. While insisting they have never broken any rules, all the evidence suggests they've pushed their ‘marginal gains’ envelope as far as it can be pushed. Similarly, what seems clear is that Baffert – and he is not alone in this – has a heavy reliance on the vet. That is not to imply any wrongdoing – but still, for various reasons, a string of high-profile horses from his barn have tested positive.

Indeed, over four decades he has 30 drugs positives to his name – often minuscule amounts for substances perfectly legal outside raceday.

But, come on. Someone's not done the weeding, a groom has peed on the hay after taking NyQuil for his cough, an assistant trainer has a bad back, we forgot about the skin ointment ... would you really want your million-dollar horse residing in a stable with this level of negligence?

It simply isn't good enough, as Baffert himself admitted at last year's Breeders' Cup.

“I want to have a positive influence on the sport of horseracing,” he claimed in a statement issued at Keeneland in November.

“Horses have been my life and I owe everything to them and the tremendous sport in which I have been so fortunate to be involved. We can always do better, and that is my goal. Given what has transpired this year, I intend to do everything possible to ensure I receive no further medication complaints.”

In short, even Baffert admitted enough is enough. He pledged to sort it out. Perhaps if he had done so we might have been spared such a grubby, unfortunate aftermath to one of the world's showpiece contests. Even if it was all just an innocent mistake.

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Eight examples of where racing is shooting itself in the foot

Geir Stabell | July 18, 2021

Henry Ford said, “If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got.” I wonder what he would have made of how racing has developed over the years?

Perhaps he would have been less than impressed. Perhaps he would agree that, although progress has been made in several fields, absolute stalemate in others is hampering the sport in off-putting ways – making it unappealing to potential new followers. Here are some examples.

Stalls numbers

The first time I noticed that starting stalls did not have numbers displayed on the front in France, I thought it was a mistake. It wasn't. For whatever reason, the French have decided that this is how it should be. So, when people try to follow a horse in a large field, they will have some job seeing exactly where their selection starts from.

Furthermore, on stalls positions, isn't it unfortunate that we stage races where horse number 1 may start from stall 12, while horse 12 may start from stall 7 and so on. This is obviously confusing to anyone looking at the sport for the first time.

Compare this with football (the soccer variety), a sport whose vast popularity is partly down to its simplicity. Racing is far more complicated, something that makes it a harder sell to new customers.

Alternating silks

This is all about appearance and image. Horses owned in partnerships often race in alternating colours – one day the rider is in red, the next time the horse runs they are dressed in white. This makes it hard to become acquainted with horses.



The gates open at the start of the 2018 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, when Enable beat 18 rivals. Can you spot any stall numbers?

Horses late into the paddock

Racecourses entice racegoers to study the horses in the paddock, explaining how they will enjoy the experience more that way. Yet they ignore that when allowing late paddock appearances. Some trainers do this often, holding their

horses back as long as possible before taking them to the paddock. Many racegoers will miss seeing a horse that does just one lap before it heads out to the course.

And, when it is announced that a horse has been given permission to go

down to the start early, all too often the horse has left the paddock already.

Perhaps it would make sense to set a deadline for entering the paddock, say 15 or 20 minutes before post time.

Late jockey changes

These are also off-putting, and not just to new fans. Serious horseplayers hate these cases, for obvious reasons. Trainers can make jockey changes after racing has started. It's unavoidable when a jockey gets sidelined and needs replacing, but when trainers with more than one horse in the race have to scratch their 'first string', we often see the stable's number one jockey taking over on the other horse. This means that a runner suddenly gets an upgrade in the saddle.

Some trainers have also played the trick of declaring a horse with an apprentice or young, inexperienced rider with a poor record, then switching to a top jockey shortly before racing - presumably after the horse's connections have all placed their bets at fixed odds.

Sectional times

International uniformity and harmonisation, at all levels, would make the sport more attractive, as would modernisation.

North American fans have enjoyed the benefit of sectional times for years. They are flagged up during the races. It's good information, and people attending the races for the very first time can easily grasp it.

Why do we see - as an attempt at doing the same is finally being made in the UK - sectionals being expressed in a totally different format? The U.S. format displays split times as each quarter is completed. In Britain, the ITV coverage shows times per furlong in the corner on the screen, and as furlongs are being completed, these figures roll out of view to give space for the next figure. It is hard to keep up with and not easy to relate to, even for those used to the U.S. format.

Deciding on one way of doing things across borders has never seemed easy in horseracing. Stubbornness might get in the way of common sense.

Europe has Group races, the U.S. has Graded stakes. The Breeders' Cup series has 'Win and You're In' races leading up to the big day, the All Weather Finals Day

BELMONT PARK		RESULTS RACE 4		FINAL 1:10.48
SCRATCHES: 1,12,13,14,15,16				
9	VOLKERT	JOCKEY D. DAVIS		
64	131.50	31.00	15.20	
10	SHERIFF BIANCO	JOCKEY J. ORTIZ		
9/5		4.20	2.80	
4	KING ANGELO	JOCKEY FRANCO		
8/5			3.10	
\$1 EXACTA	9-10			\$217.00
\$1 DOUBLE	3/9			\$82.25
\$1 QUINELLA	9-10			\$83.75
\$.50 TRIFECTA	9-10-4			\$344.50
\$.10 SUPERFECTA	9-10-4-11			\$710.45
\$1 PICK 3	1/3/9			\$1,094.00

Confusing? A board at Belmont Park showing returns based on different stakes

in England has 'fast track' races for the same purpose.

In Britain, horses carry stones and pounds, in France they carry kilograms, and Stateside they carry pounds only. Racing jargon is Greek enough to the man in the street as it is, and these variations do not make it any better.

Odds/dividend returns

It's confusing when one U.S. track posts betting returns to a \$2 stake for a wager, while another posts betting returns to a \$1 stake for the same wager.

It's also anything but user friendly that tracks operate with different stakes units for their bets offered on a race when posting the results. As an example, at NYRA tracks the win return is expressed to a \$2 stake, the Exacta, Double, Pick 3 and Quinella returns are all expressed to a \$1 stake, while the Trifecta return is expressed to a \$0.50 stake and the Superfecta return is expressed to a \$0.10 stake.

This can be likened to a stock market where the rise and fall in share prices for one business sector is expressed as "to one unit invested", while for another it is expressed "to two units invested" and for a third sector "to half a unit invested".

Racing tends to be plagued by attitudes like "everybody knows that this is how it works" (remember Henry Ford's words?). This way of thinking is playing its part in many of the points in this article, and it's a dangerous one - as it is based only on what we have, not what we can get.

In far too many jurisdictions, racing is far too conservative and stuck in the 'this is how we have always done things' quagmire.

Take bookmakers' odds, for instance. Betting with them, racegoers have to work out potential winnings by deciphering figures like 8/11 and 100/30. Surely it is much easier to calculate winnings by using 1.72 and 4.33?

Each-way betting

This too seems guaranteed to confuse the newcomers. That each-way betting with bookmakers only offers two places in races with fewer than 8 runners is one thing, but when an 8-runner race gets a late defection anyone who placed an each way bet on the race prior to the scratch is left with a different deal - and they cannot get the bet cancelled.

A fair way to keep this simple would be to have three places (or more) for all races, with for example 1/6th the odds or even 1/10th the odds for a place in small fields.

Conflicting rules

To round this off, it must be seriously off putting to just about everyone involved in the sport, regardless of knowledge and experience, that racing nations around the world, even countries as close as France and England, have such different rules, contrasting regulations on things like the use of the whip, interference, coupling of horses, even on determining whether a horse blindfolded as the stalls open is a runner or a non-runner.



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Meet the best-kept secret in European racing

John Gilmore | December 05, 2021

Bauyrzhan Murzabayev: "He could be a jockey for the Aga Khan some day," says German owner Guido Schmitt. Photo: John Gilmore



He's been mopping up champion jockey titles ever since he got his licence in 2013, and seasoned observers say he should soon be recognised as an elite-level rider with a big future on the international stage. Yet you've probably never heard of him.

Bauyrzhan Murzabayev, you see, is perhaps the best kept secret in European racing.

The 28-year-old hails from Almaty, the biggest city in Kazakhstan, but he rides now in Germany, where he is about to claim his third jockeys' championship in as many seasons - he has 110 victories this year, nearly double that of second-placed Andrasch Starke on 58.

Murzabayev may be big news among German race fans, but not anywhere else. He rode a big winner at Chantilly in France on October 9, but his name had racegoers scratching their heads.

I spoke with a few after his victory aboard Lord Charming in the listed Prix Le Fabuleux for Arc-winning trainer Peter Schiergen. Not one of them knew anything about him.

There was one person at the track that day who was very aware of Bauyrzhan Murzabayev, however. German owner Guido Schmitt was at the meeting to watch his own horse, Kabir, run a respectable third in a later race. "Bauyrzhan is streets ahead of the other jockeys in Germany," he said. "[He has] tremendous strength and will to win, which gives him several lengths' advantage over his rivals in races. He could be a jockey for the Aga Khan some day."

Murzabayev has been stable jockey to Cologne-based Schiergen since February, having spent the previous three seasons with another leading German trainer, Andreas Wohler, at Ravensberg in the south of the country.

The deal was signed a year ago, shortly after Murzabayev won the G2 Oleander-

Rennen at Hoppergarten on the Schiergen-trained Quian.

"We tried to get Bauyrzhan a year before, but at that time he became leading stable jockey with Andreas Wohler," said Schiergen, whose Arc win came with Danedream in 2011. "Last autumn we tried again to get him and were successful."

"We have had a very good year. Bauyrzhan and I work really well together, with Group 2 and 3 winners in Germany and the listed win at Chantilly."

Murzabayev has won his third German title easily, with many winners for outside stables. "He is very professional in everything he does and a good horseman," said Schiergen.

It's a far cry from his early days in Kazakhstan.

"As a child, the family had one or two racehorses, which initially created my



interest in the sport,” said Murzabayev. “When still a young boy, I rode in traditional Kazakhstan gallop and endurance races, usually for boys aged between 12 and 13, and when my weight became too high for these, I obtained my Kazakhstan apprentice licence in 2007.”

His career as a jockey started to take off when he was awarded a licence to ride in Czechia (the Czech Republic) from 2012. Four years later he had become Czech champion for the third time, with 42 wins, which included the Czech 2000 Guineas on Aldar and the Oaks on Anga River. He also won four races abroad.

So it was no surprise that Murzabayev began to attract increasing interest from other leading stables in the region, and he finally accepted an offer to ride in Germany.

“In Germany, I started riding for Jan Korpas and then Roland Dzubas in Hoppergarten,” he said. “I finished 12th in the jockeys’ championship that year.”

The following season, he was on the move again after Wohler noted his talent and offered him a contract. “Andreas Wohler asked me to be his third jockey, but with the option of more,” said Murzabayev.

The change to a top German stable saw Murzabayev’s natural talent bear fruit once more and he ended the season sixth in the German title race.

Above – Stylish: Bauyrzhan Murzabayev winning the listed Prix Le Fabuleux on Lord Charming (left) at Chantilly in October. Photo: John Gilmore

Right – Peter Schiergen. Photo: Mark Ruhl/Deutscher Galopp

Below right – Andreas Wohler. Photo: Mark Ruhl/Deutscher Galopp

Since then he hasn’t looked back. He has been a dominant force in German racing.

“I was German champion jockey for the first time in 2019, then the following year working as stable jockey for Andreas Wohler and this season with Peter Schiergen,” Murzabayev said. “As a result, it has boosted my total career jockey wins to over 600.”

Murzabayev has also represented Kazakhstan in the European jockeys’ cup day, winning it twice - in 2016 and 2018 at the Czech Velka Chuchle racecourse near Prague.

He has yet to win a G1, but Murzabayev has ridden an Arc winner, having been aboard 2021 hero, Turquator Tasso, a year earlier in the G1 Allianz Grosser Preis Von Bayern at Munich, where he was beaten a neck.

It’s surely only a matter of time before he does triumph at the highest level. Bauyrzhan Murzabayev is unlikely to remain a secret for long.





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Gr.1 winner as 3 and 4yo

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What They're Thinking **Sir Mark Prescott: 'Modern people have no understanding of the working animal anymore'**

Patrick Lawrence Gilligan | February 10, 2021

Sir Mark Prescott:
"Bureaucrats have a place
[in racing administration]
but should not dominate."

I was neighbors with Sir Mark Prescott for the best part of 16 years. On the first morning I encountered him, I said, "Good morning, Sir Mark." He replied "Good morning Mr Gilligan." Sixteen years later, on my last morning in Newmarket, I said, "Good morning, Sir Mark." And he said, "Good morning, Mr Gilligan."

I sent my son to Heath House, for his apprenticeship. If you cannot afford to send your child to public school, you should consider Heath House.

Jack didn't thank me. He would return home each morning a stumbling exhausted wreck. But, after a year, the kid returned a young man. He was taught punctuality, self discipline, personal grooming, manners, respect for authority, loyalty, decency, inspiration. And the highest standards of horsemanship anywhere.

Jack looks back with fondness on those times, making friends, laughing with his fellow workers, sitting the tough ones. It toughened him up and gave him a seat on a horse a prince would be proud of. He still hasn't thanked me.

Everything is as it should be with Sir Mark. Within the ivy covered walls of his Heath House stables, superficially at least, time stands still. Evening stables inspections are conducted with a formality found nowhere else anymore. The legendary but tragic jockey Fred Archer was apprenticed to trainer Matt Dawson here and, despite the addition of equine treadmills, pools, horse walkers and other state of the art training aids, the place still seemingly breaths Victorian fog from its chimneys.

Sir Mark says he does have a mobile phone - but no-one has the number.

He inherited his Baronetcy in 1965, and by 1970, following an 18-month stay in hospital after a fall in a steeplechase broke his back, he became Newmarket's newest, and youngest (by 19 years) racehorse trainer.

For many years never seen without a cigar in his hand, Sir Mark Prescott has lived his life on his terms. The old Harrovian has lived a Sherlock Holmesian lifestyle, a confirmed bachelor in spite of his enjoyment of female companionship, with a love of the arts and horse racing history and the entry book.

He has landed legendary gambles and improbable winning sequences that have left the handicappers scratching their heads. In 1980, he trained 2-year-old Spindrift to 13 victories in a season, the first time it had been done in 100 years. In 2004, he wrung seven victories from three-year-old Masafi - in 12 days, at six different racecourses, covering 2,500 miles by horse box.

He is the longest-serving trainer in Britain now, teetotal, and much too sprightly for his assistant's liking. This son of a barrister has spent his life turning the training of a racehorse into a piece of performance art.

He has played the part of Newmarket trainer for five decades now, and, with the sad passing of the equally iconic Sir Henry Cecil, Prescott stands head and shoulders above all others now as an emblem of Newmarket, the sport of kings, and actually England too, now I think about it.

If you have never met him, it is your loss, but you are not alone. He has turned away some of the biggest names in the sport who came and sought his services - not for personal reasons, it is just that he has 50 stables, and he trains 50 horses, year-in, year-out. Not one less, not one more.

Who do you think is the most important person in world racing history?

Admiral Henry John Rous (1791-1877), the great British racing administrator who invented and perfected the weight-for-age scale, which is virtually unchanged to this day, and on which all races and handicaps throughout the world are framed.

(One of Prescott's favorite stories has Admiral Rous one day climbing the Newmarket grandstand steps when a lady exclaims, "Why Admiral Rous, you seem very cheery today, may I ask why?" "Well Madame," he replies. "I have just gone through the next race and have discovered that I have handicapped each horse so well, that not one of them can possibly win.")

What is your favourite race and venue?

My favourite race is the Melbourne Cup. The atmosphere in the city for the ten days leading up to it is unique.

The venue is Epsom Racecourse. Anyone who hasn't visited the home of the Derby should climb to the top of the grandstand. The view across the hills of Surrey, from that vantage point high on the top of the downs, is spectacular.

From there it is easy to see why Federico Tesio regarded the Derby at Epsom as the supreme test of a Thoroughbred in the world.

Epsom racecourse: "Racing history suffuses the whole place," says Sir Mark Prescott. Epsom racecourse: "Racing history suffuses the whole place," says Sir Mark Prescott

The winning horse, only a 3-year-old in June, had to survive fast ground (over a mile and a half) and, in Tesio's time, a crowd of a million. The horse's temperament had to withstand a parade, a canter down, a canter back and a long walk across the downs to the start. He had to gallop uphill and downhill and, in the latter stages, cope with a pronounced camber.

He had to turn right-handed and left-handed. He had to have the pace to secure an early position, but a disposition that allowed him to settle in mid race, plus the acceleration and stamina to climb the final hill.

On a raceday, or on a quiet day for that matter, racing history suffuses the whole place and any ardent lover of the turf could seek no finer view.

What is your fondest memory in racing?

Riding my first winner, at my first ever attempt, aged 16 at Wincanton Racecourse on September 17, 1964, in a 2-mile steeplechase. One never forgets one's first kiss. However many more may follow, there is only one first kiss!

What do you see as the biggest challenge racing faces today?

Welfare. In an increasingly urban world, more and more people believe that animals think like humans, while fewer and fewer people learn enough about animals to know how they think!

Thus our administrators have a hard job on their hands. Modern people know about pets, watch enough wildlife programs to comprehend the wild, but have no experience or understanding of the working animal anymore, and that is our greatest challenge.

If you could change one thing in racing, what would it be?

I would try to ensure that those in control of the sport continue to contain an element of sportsmen and sportswomen and those with a love and deep knowledge of animals. Bureaucrats have a place, but should not dominate.

TRC GLOBAL RANKINGS

The Thoroughbred Racing Industry's
ranking system

Available at thoroughbredracing.com

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TRC GLOBAL RANKINGS



26 December 2021

Horses

Rank	Name	Country	Points
1	Knicks Go USA	USA	2129
2	St Mark's Basilica FRA	IRE	2075
3	Efforia JPN	JPN	2067
4	Gran Alegria JPN	JPN	2067
5	Golden Sixty AUS	HKO	2046
6	Palace Pier GBR	GBR	2042
7	Baaeed GBR	GBR	2041
8	Nature Strip AUS	AUS	2038
9	Contrail JPN	JPN	2025
10	Verry Elleegant NZL	AUS	1969
11	Mishriff IRE	GBR	1956
12	Essential Quality USA	USA	1954
13	Life Is Good USA	USA	1928
14	Zaaki GBR	AUS	1928
15	Space Blues IRE	FRA	1915

Jockeys

Rank	Name	Country	Points
1	James McDonald	AUS	2057
2	Frankie Dettori	GBR	1954
3	William Buick	GBR	1915
4	Joel Rosario	USA	1913
5	Flavien Prat	USA	1908
6	Irad Ortiz Jr	USA	1847
7	Christophe Lemaire	JPN	1816
8	Ryan Moore	GBR	1680
9	Luis Saez	USA	1647
10	Yuga Kawada	JPN	1572
11	Jim Crowley	GBR	1540
12	Jose L Ortiz	USA	1514
13	Mickael Barzalona	FRA	1491
14	John R Velazquez	USA	1478
15	Vincent Ho	HKO	1475

Trainers

Rank	Name	Country	Points
1	Charlie Appleby	GBR	2820
2	Chad C Brown	USA	2711
3	John & Thady Gosden	GBR	2575
4	Bob Baffert	USA	2443
5	Brad H Cox	USA	2312
6	Aidan O'Brien	IRE	2299
7	Chris Waller	AUS	2217
8	Jamie Richards	NZL	1901
9	Todd Pletcher	USA	1776
10	William Haggas	GBR	1747

Owners

Rank	Name	Country	Points
1	Godolphin	AUS	3356
2	Coolmore Partners	IRE	2562
3	Shadwell Estate Company	GBR	2220
4	Sunday Racing Co Ltd	JPN	1829
5	Peters Investments Et Al	AUS	1810
6	Silk Racing Co Ltd	JPN	1695
7	Klaravich Stables Et Al	USA	1590
8	Juddmonte Farms	USA	1560
9	Michael Dubb Et Al	USA	1542
10	WinStar Farm Et Al	USA	1519

Sires

Rank	Name	Country	Points
1	Deep Impact JPN	JPN	2307
2	Dubawi IRE	GBR	2222
3	Galileo IRE	IRE	2189
4	Frankel GBR	GBR	1888
5	Kingman GBR	GBR	1872
6	Sea The Stars IRE	GBR	1784
7	Into Mischief USA	USA	1762
8	Shamardal USA	FRA	1610
9	Medaglia D'oro USA	USA	1517
10	Tapit USA	USA	1508