

15 December 2016

the weekly guide to your sport

GOPOINTING

IT'S NO JOKE FOR
MCINTYRE AS HE STEALS
THE SHOW WITH A DOUBLE

TRAINER TALK

This week, Jake Exelby visits the yard of
Sarah Case



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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



The Christmas countdown has begun!

Festive greetings to the latest edition of Go Pointing and the last before the big day itself, Christmas!

Here at the office things are looking awfully festive as the staff prepare for the Big Fat Cheesy Christmas Party and all the fun that comes with it!

In similar fashion, Point-to-Point racing has already hung up its saddle following the last three

meetings on Sunday – reports for which are all inside – and will not return to action until Chaddesley Corbett host their Harkaway Club meeting on Tuesday 27th December.

In case you were wondering, the office will be open right up until next Friday and we will back in action again on Wednesday 28th to bring you all the latest news and take those all-important entries!

Go Pointing will follow on the Thursday (no edition next week I'm afraid), so all that's left for me

to do is wish you all a very Merry Christmas from all the team here at the Point-to-Point Racing Company and for me to go and uncork the mulled wine...

Tom Chilman,
Editor



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Front Cover Photo by Alun Sedgemore

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IN THE FRAME

Who was capturing the action last weekend?

With three meetings on last Sunday, our Point-to-Point snappers were spread right across the country to capture the best of the action on offer.

Both Grace Beresford and Tim Holt had sole responsibility for the Ratcheugh Racing Club at Alnwick and the Cornwall Hunt Club at Wadebridge respectively, whilst John Beasley, Phil Britt and Alun Sedgemore all headed to Wiltshire to

cover the Hursley Hambledon Hunt at Larkhill. Once again, all five photographers did a great job behind the lens with some fantastic photos being sent through to us here at Point-to-Point racing HQ.

And don't forget to use the hashtag **#gopointing** when sharing your best Point-to-Point pictures via social media so we can feature them on our 'Top Tweets' page!



John Beasley johnbeasleypix.co.uk
Hursley Hambledon at Larkhill



Grace Beresford p2pnorthernphotos.co.uk
Ratcheugh Racing Club at Alnwick



Phil Britt philbrittphotos.zenfolio.com
Hursley Hambledon at Larkhill



Tim Holt timholt@talktalk.net
Cornwall Hunt Club at Wadebridge



Alun Sedgemore sportingprints.biz
Hursley Hambledon at Larkhill



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MEETING REPORTS



The caption to the photo to the right goes in here and this is where you describe the photo in a bit of narrative
Photo: Photographer Name website address

THE HURSLEY HAMBLEDON HUNT at LARKHILL

Sunday, 11 December

by Bob Bracher

An exciting afternoon's racing took place at Larkhill last Sunday when the Hursley Hambledon held their Point-to-Point.

The weather was kind to racegoers who were able to enjoy the racing in dry and pleasant conditions with the rain that fell the day before easing the ground to what riders described as good going. The Men's Open race had a dramatic conclusion, Aikideau was a smooth winner of the Ladies' Open race and the riding honours went to Martin 'Fly' McIntyre who secured a double.

The Moore Blatch Men's Open race was a high-quality affair with several National Hunt winners amongst the ten-strong field. The race turned into a virtual match over the last three fences with Lilbitluso ridden by replacement jockey Will Biddick (substituting for the injured John Matthias) duelling with Real Milan, ridden by Jack Jones. They were still locked together at the last fence, with Real Milan possibly looking as if he was getting the better of the argument, when Lilbitluso fell leaving Jones' mount to come home for an easy victory. Real Milan has been a revelation for the Jones family, who train near Ross-on-Wye, for whom this is their only horse. Bought out of Donald McCain's yard, he ran some good races last season before winning three races towards the end for his novice rider. Trainer Nick Jones reported afterwards

that he thought that he might be a better horse this season and is a laid-back character who "could be ridden through the middle of Gloucester without turning a hair." He ran well in the Coronation Gold Cup last season and this could be a target for the gelding. His 21-year-old rider, who is now a pupil assistant for Kim Bailey, was securing his fourth career victory.

Aikideau got Champion trainer Jack Barber's season off to the best possible start by comfortably winning the Ladies' race under Bryony Frost. The leading horse in the Wessex area for last season picked up where he finished off and, despite being faced by another strong field headed by favourite Grand Gold, the gelding relished the good ground and won by six lengths. Bryony said that she thought the leaders had gone off too fast but when asked to win his race from the second-last the result was never in any doubt. The plan is to continue to target Ladies' races in the area and on this form he will be hard to beat. Victoria Pendleton introduced her new horse Vesperal Dream in this race but he pulled hard and then crashed through the wing of the eighth fence. Fortunately, both rider and horse were unharmed.

The meeting began with Shantou Breeze winning the Hunt Members' race for Michael Madgwick, ridden by his 21-year-old grandson Lance. Tracking the leader Tommo until the 13th fence, the mare took it up and held off the renewed challenge of Tommo, ridden by Oz Wedmore, to win by six lengths.

To read the full meeting report, [click here](#)

www.pointtopoint.co.uk

THE CORNWALL HUNT CLUB at THE ROYAL CORNWALL SHOWGROUND

Sunday, 11 December

by *Granville Taylor*

The Royal Cornwall Showground at Wadebridge hosted the first Cornish Point-to-Point of the new season in spring-like weather before a decent-sized crowd.

Darren Edwards is already in determined mood to regain the Devon & Cornwall area jockeys' title he narrowly missed out on to Will Biddick last season. Having reached a double century of Point-to-Point winners on the opening day at Black Forest Lodge, the popular rider again justified his regular commute from Leicestershire with a double from his two rides.

Rockinrolldixie strolled clear of his rivals up the final hill to win the Restricted with Edwards sitting motionless on the progressive seven-year-old. "He is a classy horse, was keen and still pulling at the last," remarked the rider, who paid tribute to Dean and Emma Summersby for producing the gelding so fit on his seasonal debut. Trainer Dean Summersby commented that "a stronger run race in a bigger field would help him."

The Summersby yard, based near Launceston, went on to send out Open Maiden winner Chosen Lucky. This time it was not all plain sailing as the five-year-old was continually pestered by a loose horse until Edwards pressed the button on the bottom bend to secure his double. "This horse is a bit more straightforward than our first winner. He is an out-and-out stayer," reported the successful trainer, who bought his charge privately in Ireland after three unplaced Point-to-Point runs there.

Premier Portrait found a nice turn of foot to narrowly deny Consigliere in the Men's Open. Gus Levinson was content to bide his time on his prolific winning partner before pouncing on front-running Consigliere inside the last 75 yards to score going away. "He will probably go to Chaddesley Corbett at

the end of the month, then hunter chasing is a possibility," said Charles Levinson.

Consigliere was far from disgraced as he was giving the winner 7lb. "He really needs better ground and the Mixed Open at Ampton on 15th January could be next for him," remarked jockey Joe Hill. After setting off at 5.15am from Oxfordshire, Joe had already saddled the Novice Riders' winner Supreme Danehill on behalf of his father Alan, who had headed to the Larkhill meeting.

Supreme Danehill was given a positive ride by Izzie Marshall, enjoying the third success of her career. "I had my first ride in this race last year and then had winners on Conkies Lad at Charing and Penshurst," said the 17-year-old rider who is taking A-levels at Claremont College, East Sussex.

Vicky Wade opened her account for the season when the grey King Of Alcatraz made all and finished 20 lengths clear of Ambitious Pursuit, the only other finisher in the three-runner Ladies' Open. The winner was left well clear when odds-on favourite Ohio Gold unseated Natalie Parker at the third-last. "Nothing would go on so I decided to take control of the race," said the winning rider after the trio had dawdled in the early stages.

Chilhampton owner/trainer Roy Smith reported that he was worried that his 10-year-old gelding, winning for the first time since taking a hunter chase at Exeter three years ago, might not be fit enough. "He was coughing early last season and I just have a bit of grass to train him on," he said.

The seven-runner Intermediate turned into a virtual match on the final circuit between Follow The Paint and Boygojumping, with the first-named taking command at the last to score her third course victory. "She is genuine and thrives on her work. She can be keen but the sit-and-wait tactics panned out well," commented trainer John Heard, who handles the mare on behalf of the Beefeaters Syndicate, and paid a nice tribute to winning rider, 20-year-old Jake Bament, who works in the Philip Hobbs yard.





THE RATCHEUGH RACING CLUB at RATCHEUGH FARM

Sunday, 11 December

by Peter Burgon

The 2016/17 Northern Area season got off to a great start at Sunday's well-supported Ratcheugh Racing Club fixture at Alnwick, with 67 runners on the six-race card, including 17 from Yorkshire and a further 12 raiders from yards as far away as Denbigh, Oakham and Towcester.

The Ratcheugh Farm course had missed most of the rain which swept across many parts of Northumberland a few days earlier and racing took place on ideal good-to-soft going, which drew plenty of praise from owners, trainers and jockeys.

Winning hurdler Always Tipsy came up trumps on his first start for Cockburnspath handler Alan Wight in the Ancroft Tractors NPPA Club Members Race. Previous course winner Pyjama Game made most of the running under William Ramsay until joined three out by Always Tipsy. The latter found a bit extra in the last 75 yards to score by a length in the hands of Nick Orpwood, with the promising Whats Left a further five lengths back in third.

Owned by John Cockburn, Patrick Home and Alan Wight, the gelding ran at Cheltenham on the corresponding day in 2015 off a mark of 122. After three seasons under Rules at Nick Alexander's Kinneston yard, this was his debut over fences and a 20th career start.

Weston Flame formed the first leg of a treble for Middleham farrier Justin Landy in the two-and-a-half-mile Colin McBratney Racing 4, 5 and 6 year olds Open Maiden Race.

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Well ridden by Joe Wright, the six-year-old Westerner mare left her rivals toiling from four out and went on to beat Dynamic Island by five lengths, with Bentons Lad a similar margin away in third.

Previously trained by Ben Case, the winner made her racecourse debut in a Listed Mares' Bumper at Huntingdon in December 2014. She changed hands for £5,500 at Doncaster Sales in May 2016 and now runs in the colours of The Heading for Home Partnership which comprises Justin Landy, Jimmy King, Pauline Southerington (King's sister), Camilla Southerington and Robin Woodward.

Wright said: "She had been working well at home with Ardea and Knocklong and so I was fairly confident that she would be in the mix."

Catherine Walton made a good start to her defence of the Youngs RPS Northern Area Ladies Championship by steering the Justin Landy-trained gelding Knocklong to a fourth course victory in the Thornton Hickey Ladies Open Race. Always going well, the eight-year-old had the prize in safe keeping from three out and coasted home with eight lengths to spare over Fever Pitch.

Making his first visit to Alnwick, Dale Peters made the 490-mile round trip from Sawtry near Peterborough worthwhile by partnering Chipmunk to victory in the Northumberland Leisure Open Maiden Race. Given a patient ride, the six-year-old Kayf Tara mare gradually reeled in the leaders on the final circuit before taking it up at the last and securing a two-length verdict over the promising four-year-old Cherry Coward-trained gelding, Path To Freedom.

To read the full meeting report, [click here](http://www.pointtopoint.co.uk)

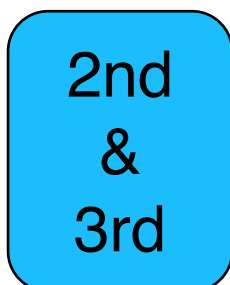
P2P STATS

THE CORNWALL HUNT CLUB

Premier Portrait's Wadebridge win was the first for a Charles Levinson-trained runner in Open class, following 11 previous successes in Novice Rider or Club Members company.



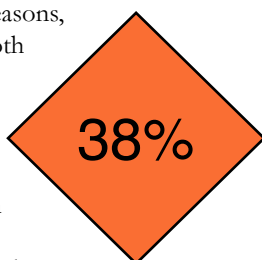
Supreme Danehill and Consigliere were just Alan Hill's second and third runners at Wadebridge in the past 10 years - Start Royal, second in the Mens Open at this fixture in 2012, was the only other at the Cornwall track.



King of Alcatraz gave Vicky Wade her earliest victory in a season since a Restricted success at this meeting in 2012. She has been aboard all of trainer Roy Smith's last 7 Point and hunter chase winners dating back to February 2013.



Trainer Dean Summersby has now recorded a double in 4 of the last 5 seasons, including at both of the last two Wadebridge fixtures. Summersby runners ridden by Darren Edwards since the start of last season have a strike-rate of 9-24 (38%).

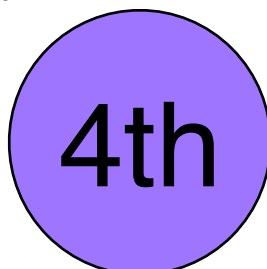


THE HURSLEY HAMBLEDON HUNT

Bryony Frost's record in Ladies Opens for Jack Barber now stands at 9-15 (60%) following Aikideau's Hursley Humbledon success on Sunday.



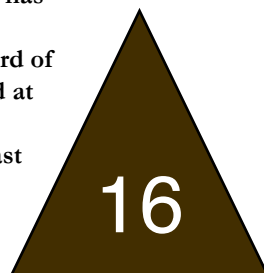
Jack Jones' win aboard Real Milan in the Mens Open was the fourth in Points for both horse and rider, each gained in a different Pointing Area (South Wales, South Midlands, Midlands and Wessex).



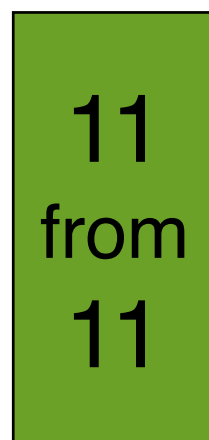
Martin McIntyre's double on Coolharbour Joe and Titans Approach is his second in his Points career, following a brace at Littlewindsor last May.



With victory aboard Anquetta in the Conditions event, Sam Waley-Cohen has extended his personal record of having scored at least once in each of the last 16 Pointing seasons (and at Larkhill in each of the last 6)



THE RATCHEUGH RACING CLUB

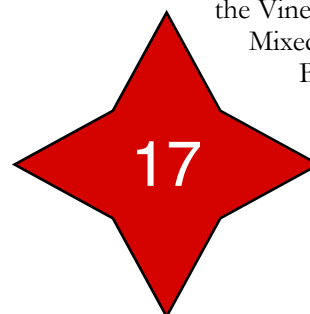


Justin Landy's Alnwick hat-trick was gained on the first occasion he has saddled 3 runners at the same meeting, and it extends his unbeaten run in Points to 11 dating back exactly a year.

Victory aboard Chipmunk in the Open Maiden added the Northern Area as the seventh in which Dale Peters has recorded riding successes.



The field size of 17 for the Men's Open was bettered only once in the whole of last season, when 19 horses contested the Vine a Craven Mixed Open at Barbury in February.



Be sure to look out more 'P2P STATS' pages throughout the 2016-17 season...



Photo: *****

Foran Equine sponsor multiple champion Will Biddick

Five-time British champion and record-holding Point-to-Point rider Will Biddick is being sponsored by horse feed supplement specialists Foran Equine for the 2016/17 season.

Biddick, 29, who rides primarily for Britain's champion Point-to-Point trainer, Somerset-based Jack Barber, will wear the Foran Equine logo each time he rides in Point-to-Points. His new sponsor is entering a second season as backers of British Point-to-Pointing through its sponsorship of two national trainers' championships, while its associated company, Connolly's RED MILLS, is about to celebrate ten years as sponsor of Britain's intermediate series of Point-to-Points, which culminates in a valuable hunters' chase final at Cheltenham.

Biddick runs a breaking and pre-training yard in Somerset where he feeds both Connolly's RED MILLS and Foran Equine products. He said: "It's great to gain sponsorship from a company whose products I use."

"Foran Equine and Connolly's RED MILLS are recognised national sponsors of Point-to-Pointing and the sport appreciates their input. I hope to ride plenty of winners carrying Foran Equine branding in the new season."

Kirsty McCann, Equine Technical Support at Foran Equine said: "We are delighted to announce our partnership with Will Biddick. When the opportunity arose to support the

country's leading Point-to-Point rider, and a man who uses our products at his yard, it was very much an easy decision for us."

UK General Manager of Connolly's RED MILLS Derek Fallon also commented on the sponsorship "We are very excited about our involvement in the 2016/17 Point-to-Point season – the trainers' titles recognise the hard work that goes into feeding and producing horses fit to win races, and being associated with Will adds an extra element for us."

A Cheltenham Festival-winning rider – he landed the Festival Plate in 2009 on the Venetia Williams-trained Something Wells – Biddick is a byword for stylish and efficient riding on the Point-to-Point circuit, and in recent years he has become the most active participant. He has been national champion in each of the past five seasons, and in 2015 smashed the record for number of wins in a season when beating the previous best score of 56 and setting a new high of 68.

His career tally of 312 point-to-point wins puts him fourth on the all-time table, but at his current rate he could be pressing for the no.1 spot and Richard Burton's 414 winners within a few seasons. Between February 8 last year and May 1 this year he partnered 100 winners, achieving a wins-to-rides ratio that was unthinkable until he and Barber teamed up. Born and raised in Cornwall, Biddick is also frequently first-choice amateur rider for Britain's multiple champion Jumps trainer, Paul Nicholls.

TRAINER TALK

SARAH CASE

Sarah Case runs the Pointing side of husband Ben's successful National Hunt operation at Wardington Gate Farm, on the Edgcote estate, near Banbury in Oxfordshire *writes Jake Exelby*



Sarah combines training five horses herself with managing the Ben Case Racing office and being a full-time mother to three children, the eldest of whom, Charlie, turned 16 last year and has already ridden between the flags. I paid the Case family a visit recently and talked to Sarah, Ben, Charlie and stable jockey Max Kendrick.

Ben has been training professionally for 17 years, “since a few months before Charlie was born,” chips in Sarah – and, while he has never trained Pointers, he is steeped in the sport. “We farmed up in Norfolk,” reminisces Ben. “Dad (Robert) pointed for a long while, alongside the likes of the Wales’s and the Blooms. He was also a course inspector and helped run the Fakenham Point-to-Point, which my brother Adam now does.”

“Yes, I rode,” he laughs in answer to my enquiry. “I used to be ten stone seven, though you wouldn’t know to look at me now, and never struggled with my weight. Ben had 60 or 70 rides and two winners, both in 1989 – debut success (and a fitting 21st birthday present) Tank Commander at Mollington, and Harpley Madam for his father at Higham. Among others, Ben rode for Bronwen Hurley, still a familiar figure on the South Midlands Pointing scene.

Ben’s journey from rider to trainer took him from Norfolk to Northamptonshire, via Lambourn – as assistant trainer to Oliver Sherwood, Ireland – where he worked for Arthur Moore, America – a stint with Shug McGaughey which included looking after Breeders Cup winner Inside Information, and then Dubai – where he spent five years as assistant trainer to Erwan Charpy. He’s open about his reasons for returning, and the decision to choose Edgcote as a base.

“Dubai was lovely, but we couldn’t stay for ever. It was a good experience – but not my end goal. We only ever planned to do two years,” he admitted. On Ben’s return, “We didn’t want to go to Newmarket or Lambourn so we ended up in the Old Coach House, elsewhere on what was then the Courage Estate, where Spanish Steps was trained. We had ten boxes, the flat above the stables, and it was Sarah, me and one other girl.”

The move to Wardington Gate Farm came in 2006, when the dairy farm was converted into stables, and: “The Point-to-Point yard came into being three years ago,” Sarah tells me. “We’re going into our fourth season.” So how did it come about? “It’s all Max’s fault,” she laughs. “When Max came to work here, it was a good idea to have his mother’s Pointers here too.” Ben agrees. “Max was riding out here every day, and it seemed silly for him to travel backwards and forwards to Newmarket. We had some spare boxes and were able to separate the two yards.”



Sarah’s first runner was Clouded Thoughts at Barbury in December 2013 and had her first winner with Court Red Handed at Brocklesby Park a couple of months later, although she doesn’t remember much about the race other than that it chucked it down all day! New Alco rounded off a successful first season for her small yard with a Kingston Blount double and after a blank 2014/2015 season, she bagged three more winners last year.

Asked about the highlights of her brief training career, Sarah names two – “A double at Mollington last year with Go On Henry and Mazurati and ‘Red’ going round Aintree.” ‘Red’, of course, is Court Red Handed, who finished sixth to Warne in the 2014 Aintree Foxhunters – “He ran above his rating,” admits Sarah – giving Max Kendrick a great ride on his first attempt over the famous obstacles.

“He was up in the van the whole way and ran a blinder,” confirmed Max, going on to talk about the fences. “They’re still a fair size, especially the first ditch. I was lucky enough to walk the course with Marcus Armytage and James Martin – Marcus gave us good advice, especially on jumping the Canal Turn.” Sarah confesses to trepidation beforehand, but “I did manage to watch – it was actually alright.”

Unlike Ben, Sarah does not have a background in racing, although she tells me: “I grew up with horses, and

did a lot of pony club and hunting, but wasn’t very brave.” Charlie agrees with his mother. “You tried to scare me out of it!” At 17, Charlie is the eldest of three Case children, the others being 14-year-old George – at the local Sulgrave team chase when I visit, and “keener on racing than riding, he’s a form and stats man” – and Emilia, who at the age of 10, firmly replies “No, I don’t want to break any bones” to my question of whether she plans a career in the saddle.

Sarah and Ben are up front about being professionals in what used to be the amateur world of Pointing. “Everybody else is doing it,” admits Ben. “Matt and Nicky Sheppard, Caroline and Gerald Bailey, Lawney and Alan Hill. And it saves having empty boxes!” Sarah concurs. “I can see both sides. Point-to-Pointing was always a fun sport for farmers, but it’s

now so professional and if you can't beat 'em... join 'em."

"Those days have gone," agreed Ben. "When I started Pointing, my father had a couple of broodmares, but owner-breeders are few and far between now and we've got to move with the times. We used to have seven or eight at home," he continues. "A couple of home-breds, some for outside owners and some of our own. Lots of farmers had three or four, but they all stopped as it became more professional."



Talk turns to the Irish model of Point-to-Pointing, of which Ben and Sarah are both big fans. "Pointing is a great place to start off young horses," says Sarah keenly. "They get good experience before going under rules and more people are making a business of selling Pointers – we're finally catching up with Ireland."

Ben cites his recent Cheltenham bumper third Pulp Fiction as an example of why he's a fan of the Irish way. "He's already run in a three-mile Point-to-Point in Ireland and had been well-schooled, so was able to perform in a bumper. They know what they're doing over there. Store horses wouldn't be able to do that. Oski (a bumper winner from the yard in May) took me a season to get ready and is still very green." And while Ben admits that the proven horses from Ireland cost more money, "They save a season's training fees."

However, when it comes to tradition, Sarah is keen to maintain the link with hunting. Referring to the change in the

rules for next season, where horses no longer have to hunt to qualify for Pointing, she sighs, "It's a shame, but people haven't been doing it for years. We have been hunting our horses though. Older horses appreciate it, and Court Red Handed has been out a lot." And it's not just the veterans who benefit. "Hunting made a man of Mazurati," Sarah admits. "He loved it. He had plenty of ability under Rules, but was soft, and wasn't handling it. Hunting got him jumping well, made him school better, and certainly didn't do him any harm!"

A development that gets the Case seal of approval is the role of the PPA. "It's changed," says Ben. "They're thinking how to improve the sport, whether it be Mares races or two-and-a-half mile races. (Chairman) Tim Curtis is always asking people for their opinions." But he does add a note of caution. "Hunts are not always making money from their Point-to-Point. They're struggling financially and we need to sort it out... or who'll hold the meetings? There's a big divide between rich and poor hunts," he continues, "and we could see courses like Kingston Blount and Chaddesley Corbett having seven or eight meetings... and others none at all."

Sarah would also like the prize money to improve, although there is a positive response to the new Timico Mixed Open and Skinner's Ladies Open series sponsorships. "It's not just about the money," she admits, "But it costs the same to train one under Rules as in a Point-to-Point yard, and we have horses rated 110 earning good prizes. Mind you, it's a hobby, isn't it – like golf club membership. Why else would you own a Pointer?"

Wary of letting Ben and Sarah reminisce about the 'good old days' (only joking), I ask the two young jockeys what they think about the state of Pointing in 2016. Max is keen on how it can reinvigorate older horses. "Look at Big Fella Thanks (14-year-old who won two Hunter Chases last season) – he'd lost his way under rules. And they can teach novice riders." Ben jumps in on behalf of his son. "Novice Riders races allow that type of horse to keep running, those who are too high in the handicap or not good enough any more. It's good

to give Charlie rides on more experienced horses."

Asked what innovations they would like to see in the sport, everyone has a different answer. Ben: "More conditions races, for example for unplaced maidens and older horses." Sarah: "A bit more planning, especially over Easter, where there are so many meetings with similar races." Charlie: "More races over different distances." And Max? "Entry passes for jockeys. I'm fed up of having to get my licence out of the boot!"

I close with my usual question: what do you love about Point-to-Pointing? "It's a bit more relaxed than rules Racing," says Sarah. "There's more of a friendly atmosphere, it's a good family day out that people can enjoy, there's great camaraderie and everyone helps each other. You don't want to lose Pointing, you don't want it to become too professional."

Charlie agrees with his mother. "On my first ride, I was sat between Sam Davies-Thomas and Johnny Bailey. Sam lent me his boots." Knowing those two, I feel sorry for the lad, but apparently they were both helpful... But I'll leave the final word to Max. "There are loads of youngsters coming through and it's great for experience. After all, it's better to make a mistake down the back at Kingston Blount than live on At The Races!"

MAX KENDRICK

21-year-old Max is another graduate of pony racing. "I got into it through (former East Anglian rider) Tim Moore, who steered me towards horses after my Dad died. And ever since my first race, I've wanted to do it properly." So how many pony race winners did he ride? "None," he laughs. "I wasn't any good at it. It's so competitive," he continues, "If you look at the money that some of those ponies are going for..." And Max is refreshingly honest about his grass-roots experiences. "When I was doing it, it was great, but you didn't learn about race-riding – you tried to nick ten lengths at the start and just went flat out from A to B!"

Max had his first ride over fences when pulling up on Lady Ann Lewis at

Whitfield in December 2011. "I rode here three times," he recalls, "Before she got tendinitis." Max's first winner came on New Alco for Tory Hayter at Horseheath in March 2012 and he explains how the connection came about. "Her mother Ruth used to train Pointers for my Mum and Tory was based with Ferdy Murphy, where New Alco came from."



Max had two winners from seven rides in his first season, then a further four in 2012/2013, while based in East Anglia and studying for his A-levels. It was then that the connection with the Case family came about, as Max moved to become stable amateur to Ben. At the same time, the pointers owned by his mother Carolyn – Clouded Thoughts, Court Red Handed and New Alco – came with him and the wins continued. As well as Sarah, the likes of Lynn Redman, Karen Lawther and Chris Loggin provide him with opportunities.

Max's career total of victories now stands at 15 in Points, seven over jumps and one on the flat. But is it fair to say he's also a bit of an expert in Arab racing? "I don't know about that," he replies modestly. "I kind of fell into it. I was based at Newmarket and gave (former top Arab trainer) Gill Duffield a call so started riding out for her. She used to have about 50 horses and split them between James Owen and Phil Collington when she retired. I ride as first jockey for James." This involves riding for no less an owner than Hamdan al-Maktoum and Max is obviously doing a good job of it, with six winners last season placing him third in the jockeys'

championship. Let's hope he achieves the same level of success between the flags.

CHARLIE CASE

Charlie, 17, had his first ride in Points when finishing fourth on Freddy Fox at Whitfield in April and hopes to gain more experience this coming season on that horse as well as Shantou River, both of which will run in his own green and black colours. But he wasn't always planning on getting into the saddle. "I did a lot of pony club with Mr Stepstone (the family pony, formerly ridden by Max Kendrick and now by brother George) when I was growing up," he explains. "But after a while I got bored and didn't really enjoy it. Also," he confesses, "There was too much cricket and rugby!"

It was on his father's Mark The Book that, in his words, Charlie "discovered speed" and there was no stopping him after that. "I decided at 15 that I wanted to ride in a Point-to-Point," he continues, "But I kept trying to put you off by feeding you up!" interrupts Sarah, laughing, before turning serious. "I wanted Charlie to focus on his GCSEs and didn't allow him to ride if Ben didn't think he was ready."

Charlie wasn't lacking in experienced mentors to help him prepare. This included work on the gallops and schooling with Max Kendrick, some sessions with renowned tutor Yogi Breisner and instruction from stable jockeys Kielan Woods and Daryl Jacob.

Charlie's plan for his debut was to: "Get over the first and hold tight, but Sam Davies-Thomas rushed off 15 lengths in front and I missed the start! El Raven – who I knew from pony club – was helpful. I sat in behind her and she just beat me on the line for third."

Asked about his ambitions, Charlie was modest. "Just get round in another couple of Points, really. I'm doing it for fun. But if it goes well and I don't grow any more, who knows..." The level-headed youngster seems, so far, to have succeeded on all counts – persuading his parents to let him ride over fences, finishing in the frame on his first mount and passing his GCSEs

and starting sixth form. Let's hope this season brings further rewards.

FIVE TO FOLLOW

Court Red Handed

"He's like a big version of (family pony) Mr Stepstone! A typical quirky Flemensfirth, he's 11 now but still enthusiastic. He'd struggle in Opens and conditions races are ideal for him – he won one at Ampton last year and will probably head back for the same race. It's for nine-year-olds and up but they should make 12 the minimum age!"

Freddy Fox

"Quite a shy horse. We'll keep to Restricteds with Charlie riding but he won't run until after Christmas – we've got to get the jockey fit!"

Mazurati

"Won at Mollington before pulling up at Chaddesley Corbett. He's been in since early September and is easy to get ready, so we plan to run him in an early season Restricted – I think he'll pick one up. The ground doesn't matter to him."



Moment Present

"Ex-Charlie Mann. He won a Ladies in the North but has been off for four years and is 11 now. He's been bought by Simon Hope for his daughter Millie to ride and only came to us in September, but seems straightforward and should be out after Christmas."

Shantou River

"Late to come in because we're waiting for better ground – he's a spring horse. He was second in a Point in Ireland but still a Maiden. He's Charlie's ride."

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Few pictures from today's point-to-point at [@WadebridgeP2P](#) - couldn't have asked for a better day!
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