Harry Ryall

The Wessex Moment of the Month for November/December has been awarded to Harry Ryall who trained his first winner Another Furlough when the gelding won the Maiden race at Badbury Rings in November from only his second ever runner.

The opportunity was taken to catch up with Harry to find out more about him, his background and his hopes for his horses he is training this season

Where did your interest in horses and racing first begin?

I was born in 1998 in Doncaster and have two brothers Dominic and Tom (who is now the clerk of the course at Warwick and Nottingham) My father Nicholas had shares in racehorses before I was born but having three children under the age of five this interest was rather put on hold. I remember being taken to Town Moor as a child but it was the appearance of Camelot in the St Leger of 2012 seeking to win his fourth Classic in a season that really fired my enthusiasm for horse racing and I started following it and the betting

When did you first ride?

I went to trainer David Brown for a week’s work experience as a 16-year-old before going to the Northern Racing School for 3 months. I then joined the racing yard of Malcolm Jefferson in Malton and stayed at that yard for most of 2016. It was very much a family yard and many of the staff had been there for many years. My riding opportunities were limited due to my inexperience although I did go racing on a number of occasions with Malcolm’s daughter Ruth.

When did you move to Dorset?

My brother Tom had been working at Harry Fry’s yard at Seaborough for a couple of seasons and mentioned that they were looking for additional staff, so I decided to join him to broaden my experience. It was there that I learned a great deal from all of the riders who came to ride out for Harry namely Noel Fehily, Slippers Madden, Fly McIntyre and Kieran Edgar as well as Harry and Richard Barber. I knew that I wanted to look after good horses and savour Cheltenham and the other big festivals.

What are your best memories of being at Seaborough?

Unowhatimeanharry winning twice at Punchestown in 2017 and 2019 and If The Cap Fits winning at Aintree in 2019 were highlights of my time at the yard and being associated with the ill-fated Neon Wolf and the former point to pointer King Roland who I looked after. Harry & Ciara did an awful lot in the progression of my career and knowledge within the industry.

When did you move on from Harry’s yard?

As Covid struck in March 2020 I stayed in Yorkshire until May and then helped Harry and Ciara with the move to their new yard at Corscombe. I applied for a pupil assistant role with Charlie Hills in Lambourn and moved there in March 2021. I stayed there for most of the summer enjoying going to the races at Chester and Newmarket but decided that I wanted to return to the West Country and when Chris Barber offered me the chance to join his successful point to point yard, I thought that this would be a good move.

How did you adapt to a point-to-point yard having only worked in professional yards previously?

Chris has run a successful yard at Littlewindsor near Crewkerne since stopping riding and his policy of buying and selling young stock has been his trademark. In addition, he has had success with older horses notably last season with Famous Clermont, Knockmoylan and Envoye Special. I have learned a lot about point to pointing following the season with Chris which I hope will stand me in good stead as I start my career. Chris’s trust in me both on the yard and while racing allowed me to grow as an individual and I wouldn’t be in the situation I’m in today if it wasn’t for his guidance. The highlight was definitely the success of Famous Clermont winning the Novice Hunter Chase at Exeter last March which was Chris’s first win under Rules, and it showed that it meant a great deal to him.

How did the opportunity to take over the yard at Peckmoor Farm previously used by Kieran Burke come about?

At the end of the last point to point season I was considering my options and heard from Jeremy Barber that the yard might be available. I was also asked by local NH trainer Anthony Honeyball about running an overflow yard which would be based at Peckmoor. This would involve riding several lots for Anthony before then doing with any work that any horses that I may have. I acquired a horse from Chris that he wanted to sell and the seeds of the idea grew from this. I spent the summer getting the yard up to speed and had a walker installed in September. I acquired another horse at the Ascot sales in May 2022 and more have since followed so currently I have six horses in work.

Harry then talked about his horses that he has already run this season and those that he hopes to run in 2023.

Highway Hero – 5-year-old gelding by Millenary out of a Saffron Walden mare

Bought privately from Chris Barber at the end of last season after an outing at Holnicote in May. Had a pleasing debut at Badbury Rings in November when third behind a subsequent winner and then fifth in a 16 runner Maiden at Larkhill having been with the leaders at the second last. Now owned by the Three Wise Partnership consisting of Harry, Colin Bright and former rider Chris Searrio he is next likely to be seen at Milborne St Andrew on 29th January.

Another Furlough – 6-year-old gelding by Shirocco out of a Flemensfirth mare

Bought by Harry at Ascot in May having run twice in points for David Phelan last season. He was Harry’s first training success when winning at Badbury Rings over three miles ridden by Josh Newman and one he will remember as his father Nicholas who is one of the partners of the Empire Partnership was present to see the victory. Also owned by Paul Rothwell who is Nicholas’s boss at Empire Property Concepts in Yorkshire Harry was thrilled as Paul is his yard’s sponsor. He was a good second behind Bold Conduct at Larkhill before having a break for a month. He may also go to Milborne St Andrew or return to Badbury Rings in February.

Our Little Miracle – 4-Year-Old mare by Black Sam Bellamy out of a Canford Cliffs mare

Owned by Jeremy Barber she is in work but there are no immediate plans for her to run. Her dam Braztime won a Handicap on the flat at Nottingham when owned by Chris Giles and trained by Richard Hannon. Sadly, her dam died shortly after giving birth and the foal was brought up with a foster mother.

Scoresby – a 6-year-old gelding by Millenary out a mare called Lewesdon Duchess

Owned by Decimus Racing he had a couple of outings in Bumpers at Newton Abbot for Christian Williams in the summer last year. He has strengthened since joining Harry and it is hoped that he will make his debut at Milborne St Andrew at the end of January.

Rock Steady Eddy - a 5-year-old grey gelding by Telescope out of Beat Hollow mare

Owned by Premier Thoroughbred Racing Limited he is an unraced half brother to Rock On Tommy the winner of two Hurdle races for Olly Murphy and a full brother to No But I Will the winner of an Irish Maiden point to point last April and now with Oliver Greenall for whom he has been placed in two Hurdles. He may well make his debut at Chipley Park at the end of January.

Douglas Longbottom – a 5-year-old gelding by Helmet out of an American bred mare

He ran once last season in a Bumper at Larkhill for Mark Grant and subsequently was entered for sale at Ascot. He was withdrawn from the sales but he was acquired by Daniel Kyne who rode him at Larkhill. Daniel then offered the gelding to Harry who has put together a syndicate consisting of his brother Dominic, his father and a group of his brothers’ friends. He stands at 17 hands and is a strong individual. He is provisionally being considered for his jumping debut at Badbury Rings in February.