

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BRITISH HORSERACING



WRAY VAMPLEW AND JOYCE KAY

Encyclopedia of British Horseracing

The *Encyclopedia of British Horseracing* offers an innovative approach to one of Britain's oldest sports. Whilst it considers the traditional themes of gambling and breeding, and contains biographies of both human personalities and equine stars, it also devotes significant space to previously neglected areas. Entries include:

- Social, economic and political forces that have influenced racing
- Controversial historical and contemporary issues
- Legal and illegal gambling, and racing finance
- The British impact on world horseracing
- History and heritage of horseracing
- Links between horseracing and the arts, media and technology
- Human and equine biographies
- Venues associated with racing
- Horseracing websites.

The *Encyclopedia of British Horseracing* provides a unique source of information and will be of great interest to sports historians as well as all those whose work or leisure brings them into the world of racing.

Wray Vamplew is Director of Research in Sports Studies at the University of Stirling, UK. He has written extensively on horseracing and is a consultant to the National Horseracing Museum at Newmarket.

Joyce Kay is a Research Fellow in Sports Studies at the University of Stirling, UK. She has published widely on horseracing for international encyclopedias and academic journals.

Encyclopedia of British Horseracing

Wray Vamplew and Joyce Kay

First published 2005
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

© 2005 Wray Vamplew and Joyce Kay

Typeset in Goudy by
Newgen Imaging Systems (P) Ltd, Chennai, India

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

The publisher makes no representation, express or implied, with regard to the accuracy of the information contained in this book and cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any error or omissions that may be made.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the advice and information in this book is true and accurate at the time of going to press. However, neither the publisher nor the authors can accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. In the case of drug administration, any medical procedure or the use of technical equipment mentioned within this book, you are strongly advised to consult the manufacturer's guidelines.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN 978-0-71468-292-1

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	vi
<i>List of entries</i>	ix
A–Z Encyclopedia of British Horseracing	1
Chronology of British Horseracing	355
<i>Index</i>	364

Introduction

Horseracing, the first truly national sport in Britain, has a longer history than most, stretching back at least to the days of Henry VIII. It also has many unique features. First, there are two distinct codes, the traditional flat and the 'more recent' National Hunt which emerged in the nineteenth century. Second, it is highly professionalised with little room for the amateur. It has no grass roots, no junior level: while many spectators at cricket and football matches will have played the sport, few racegoers will have ridden a horse let alone raced one. Another unusual aspect of racing is that it has no fan base. Spectators seldom follow particular horses or jockeys as they would a local team and there is little shared, communal experience associated with winning...or losing. Racing is largely for individuals, both participants and spectators.

There are other major differences. Unlike most sports, there are few celebrities to empathise with or admire, although in Victorian times jockey Fred Archer was said to be the best known sportsman after W.G. Grace. Today Frankie Dettori is probably the only racing professional to be widely recognised and even his undoubted charisma does little to raise a positive profile. Nor is it a sport for the sedentary viewer as an afternoon at the races might only contain ten minutes of action. In other sports, you take your seat and the event unfolds before you. In racing, to get the most from the spectacle you have to follow proceedings from stand to paddock, from paddock to rails, from rails to winners' enclosure. Along the way you can place a bet, the original and still the main rationale for the sport. Racing and betting have always gone hand-in-hand, from the simple wager on match racing in the eighteenth century to the multi-million-pound industries of the twenty-first century. Other sports *have* betting but racing in Britain *needs* betting. It is because of this close connection that there is a widespread perception of the sport as corrupt.

Racing is so far removed from 'average' sport that it sometimes fails to recognise that it has a problem, particularly with its image. It sees nothing incongruous with trying to bring in a crowd on the basis of activities – funfairs, bouncy castles, shopping – which have no relevance to the contests taking place. Football fans take their children to see the main event, the match, not the sideshows. Given a free afternoon, most people would not choose to spend it at a racecourse. Horseracing now has to compete for the time and money of sports fans who have never had more choice, in an era of saturation coverage of football, at a time when investigative journalism and a sensationalist press

are ever more adept at rooting out scandals and misdemeanours. It continues to function in an age when most of the population has no affinity with the land, with horses, with riding, hunting or country pursuits because the majority are from urban rather than rural backgrounds. It lacks fans to speak up for it as a sport partly because of the close-knit, navel-gazing world in which it operates and partly because its relationship with gambling still evokes disapproval. Against all this, what hope does racing have of maintaining itself as a viable, acceptable, wholesome product for future generations to enjoy?

Despite a few innovations such as artificial surfaces and computerised handicapping, the sport remains rooted in the past. Races are still measured in miles and furlongs, jockeys in stones and pounds and horse values in guineas. Nineteenth-century dress codes are still maintained in the exclusive enclosures at Royal Ascot and Epsom Downs on Derby day while the ordinary racegoer, in jeans and T-shirt, munches burgers beside the funfair. The two branches of racing are equally far apart. The flat has the wealth, the prestige and the international dimension while jumping retains its local links, lowly status and poorer prize money. Yet paradoxically the Grand National is the one race that captures the public attention on a worldwide basis.

This book, however, unlike most encyclopedias, will not list the winners of this and other big races or the champion jockeys of the past century. It will not describe each of the 59 British racecourses in detail, explain the intricacies of betting terminology or provide biographies, human or equine, of the hundreds of personalities who have contributed to the history of racing. Anyone interested in these minutiae of the turf will find ample reference books to satisfy his or her curiosity. Among the most useful are the range of recent publications by Channel Four racing and, in particular, the excellent but unfortunately out-of-print *Encyclopaedia of British Flat Racing* (Mortimer *et al.*, 1977). Other invaluable sources are the *Racing Calendar*, *Ruff's Guide to the Turf*, the *Daily Telegraph Chronicle* and of course, the press especially the *Racing Post*. This is now the only specialist racing paper following the demise of the *Sporting Life* and in addition to newsprint coverage provides an unparalleled website for racing enthusiasts.

Instead of recycling old material, this volume examines some previously neglected areas such as the link between racing and the arts, alcohol and the church, and looks at the social, economic and political forces that have shaped the development of the sport. The focus is on Britain (not just England!) and its influence on world racing as well as the impact of other racing nations on the domestic scene. A major theme is continuity and change in attitudes within the sport and outside racing circles. Issues such as animal welfare, levels of prize money and transparency of decision-making are ongoing. Those of state involvement, Jockey Club rule and the sanctity of the Sabbath have gone.

There will always be debate about aspects of horseracing, not least how to spell the word or words – is it horseracing, horse-racing or horse racing? There is no standard version but this book has opted for horseracing, as in the British Horseracing Board. Similarly, traditional racing measurements have been retained along with the simplest form of race names – sponsors have generally

been omitted and commonly-accepted abbreviations have been adopted in the case of the King George (King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes) and the Arc (Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe).

It is a daunting task to cover over three centuries of thoroughbred horseracing. It is equally daunting to keep up with the rapid changes that have affected the sport in the past decade. The last two years alone have seen the abolition of betting tax, the doubling of Sunday and evening fixtures, and the promise of both Tote privatisation and the relinquishing of the disciplinary power of the Jockey Club. The time-honoured fixture list is currently under threat and there are plans afoot for race meetings on Saturday mornings. As racing fights to secure its place in the twenty-first century leisure market, who knows what else will have changed by the time this book is published!

Wray Vamplew
Joyce Kay
June 2004

List of entries

Abandonment	1	Buckle, Frank	63
Accidents	3	Cannon family	65
Administration – <i>see</i> Weatherbys	4	Carson, Willie	67
Africa	4	Cecil, Henry	68
Age	6	Charities	69
Agents	8	Cheltenham	71
Aintree	9	Chifney family	73
Alcohol	11	Children	73
All-weather racing	12	Church, The	74
Amateur riders	14	Classics	76
American invasion	16	Clubs	79
Anti-racing lobby	18	Colours	80
Apprentices	20	Corruption	82
Arabian horses	22	Dancing Brave	86
Archer, Fred	24	Darling, Frederick	87
Architecture	25	Dawn Run	88
Arkle	27	Dawson family	90
Art	28	Day family	91
Ascot	32	Deaths	92
Asia	34	Derby – <i>see</i> Classics	95
Associations	36	Desert Orchid	95
Australasia	37	Dettori, Frankie	96
Awards	40	‘Dictators of the Turf’	97
Baird, George	42	Distances	99
Becher, Martin	43	Donoghue, Steve	100
Betting	44	Doping	101
Betting shops	46	Dunwoody, Richard	103
Betting tax	48	Eclipse	106
Biddlecombe, Terry	49	Economics	107
Bookmaking and bookmakers	50	Eddery, Pat	110
Boyd-Rochfort, Captain Sir Cecil	54	Eighteenth-century horses	111
Breeding	55	Epsom Downs	113
Brigadier Gerard	58	Equipment	114
British Horseracing Board	59	Europe	115
Broadcast media	60	Evening racing	118

Facilities	120	Nineteenth-century jockeys	212
Fallon, Kieren	122	North America	215
Families	123	Oaks – <i>see</i> Classics	219
Film and drama	124	O'Brien, Vincent	219
Finishing	127	Officials	221
Fixtures	129	On-course communication	223
Flatman, Nat	130	O'Neill, Jonjo	224
Fordham, George	131	One Thousand Guineas –	
France	132	<i>see</i> Classics	225
Francome, John	135	Ownership and owners	225
Gambling – <i>see</i> Betting	138	Pattern races	229
General Stud Book	138	Piggott, Lester	231
Geography	140	Pipe, Martin	232
Going	142	Pitman, Jenny	234
Golden Miller	144	Point-to-point	235
Goodwood	145	Porter, John	237
Grand National	146	Pretty Polly	238
Heritage	150	Prize money	239
Horserace Betting Levy Board	152	Quantification	243
Hurdling and hurdlers	153	Racecourse layout	247
Industry	157	Racecourses	249
Injuries	159	Race names	253
Inns	161	Race riding	255
International	162	Race types	256
Internet	163	Racing Calendar	257
Ireland	164	Radio – <i>see</i> Broadcast media	259
Jargon	170	Red Rum	259
Jockey Club	172	Retirement	260
Jockeys	174	Richards, Sir Gordon	261
Lambourn	178	Royal Plates	262
Language – <i>see</i> Jargon	180	Royalty	263
Law and legislation	180	Rules	266
Literature and writing	181	Safety	269
McCoy, Tony	186	St Leger – <i>see</i> Classics	271
Machell, James	187	Sales	271
Maktoum family	188	Sandown Park	273
Marketing	190	Sceptre	274
Mellor, Stan	192	Scotland	276
Middle East	193	Scott brothers	278
Mill Reef	195	Scudamore, Peter	279
Museums	196	Security	280
Music	197	Smith brothers	282
Names	202	Social anthropology	283
National Stud	204	South America	285
Newmarket	205	Sponsorship	286
Nijinsky	207	Stable staff	289
Nineteenth-century horses	208	Starting	290

Starting price	292	Twentieth-century jockeys	321
Steeplechasing and steeplechasers	293	Two Thousand Guineas – see Classics	324
Stoute, Sir Michael	296	Veterinary practice	326
Strikes	297	Virtual racing	328
Sunday racing	299	Virus and other ailments	329
Superstition	300	Wales	331
Tattersall family	303	Walwyn, Fulke	333
Taylor, Alec	305	Weather	334
Television – see Broadcast media	306	Weatherbys	336
Tote	306	Weight	337
Training and trainers	308	Whipping	339
Transport and travel	311	Winter, Fred	340
Trophies and prizes	313	Women	341
Twentieth-century flat horses	315	Year (racing)	346
		York	348
		Yorkshire	349

A

Horsebox

Airborne was the last grey to win the Derby in 1946; he also won the St Leger, one of only four grey winners in the twentieth century, the most recent being Silver Patriarch (1997).

Aliysa won the Oaks in 1989 but was disqualified after failing a drugs test, handing the race to Snow Bride. The subsequent dispute with the Jockey Club led to her owner, the Aga Khan, removing his horses from Britain until 1995.

Alycidon, second to Black Tarquin in the 1948 St Leger, went on to win the stayers' triple crown (Ascot Gold Cup, Doncaster and Goodwood Cups) in 1949, the first horse to do so for 70 years.

Amrullah took part in 74 races between 1982 and 1992 without ever winning, although he earned over £26,000 in place money.

Androma is one of only two horses to have won the Scottish Grand National twice, in 1984 and 1985 – the other was Barona (1975 and 1976).

Aunt Edith was the first filly to win the King George, in 1966; there have only been four others (Park Top 1969, Dahlia 1973 and 1974, Pawneese 1976 and Time Charter 1983).

Abandonment

Racing can be abandoned at any time of year because of weather or ground conditions. Thunderstorms, fog, high wind, flooding and torrential rain may result in the loss or curtailment of a dozen flat race days each year while snow, frost and waterlogged courses have led to over 100 lost days during a winter jump season. In years of exceptionally bad weather, racing has been abandoned for weeks; in 1963 no meetings could be staged from January to early March because of heavy snow and frost while the summer drought of 1976, followed by an exceptionally wet autumn, saw nearly 90 days of jump racing alone lost to both hard ground and waterlogging. A total of 79 fixtures succumbed to the weather in 2002, a fairly average year, with a further 6 halted during the meeting.

Races may be abandoned for a variety of reasons. When Edward VII, a great supporter of racing for nearly 50 years, died in May 1910, all fixtures in Britain

2 *Abandonment*

and Ireland were cancelled for two weeks – a total of 30 race days – although most took place at later dates. The funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, in September 1997 also led to the cancellation of the racing programme as did the funeral in April 2002 of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, a great patron of National Hunt racing, and that of her late husband, George VI, 50 years earlier. Sixteen flat race fixtures were abandoned from April to June 1921 because of the industrial crisis (largely the repercussions for the railways of a miners' strike) and further meetings were lost in May 1926 as a result of the General Strike.

Another recent cause of abandonment was the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in 2001. Fears that transportation of horses and the gathering of spectators at racecourses might lead to accelerated spread of the virus resulted in a total shutdown of the sport for a week in early March. Although some courses in unaffected areas were able to resume promptly, others including the major National Hunt venue at Cheltenham found themselves in infected zones and therefore unable to hold meetings. The flagship Cheltenham National Hunt Festival in mid-March was abandoned for the first time in 57 years, causing dismay to thousands of British and Irish racegoers, trainers, owners and jockeys, none more so than the connections and fans of the Irish hurdling star, Istabraq. The three-time Champion Hurdle winner was to attempt a fourth consecutive victory, a feat never before achieved, but was robbed of his opportunity. Although he started the race in 2002, he was by then past his prime and was quickly pulled up and retired from racing.

As restrictions extended into the summer, flat racing in some areas was also affected. Over 120 days racing were eventually lost during the epidemic and with over 100 weather-related abandonments because of the unusually wet winter, 2001 proved to be the worst on record for lost racecards. A previous outbreak of foot-and-mouth, in the winter of 1967–68, also saw disruption to the racing programme. The sport was shut down completely for six weeks from the end of November to the beginning of January with a loss of 81 meetings and a further 29 days were added to the total thereafter because of regional restrictions. With little work in Britain, several top jockeys headed to France to race there. The impact of disease on horseracing fixtures, however, has a long history. In 1744 racing was prohibited by magistrates of many northern towns because of the 'direful distemper attending the horned cattle.'

The other major cause of abandonment, and by far the most serious in the first half of the twentieth century, was war. The curtailment of racing during the war years led to significant problems, not only for racecourses, trainers, jockeys and others employed in the industry but also for breeders. During both world wars the continuance of racing was viewed by many as unpatriotic and wasteful of fuel, but an exception was made for races at Newmarket where the local community was almost entirely dependent on the sport. Wartime Classics and other major races were transferred to the headquarters of racing and 1915 saw the Derby take place away from Epsom Downs for the first time in its history. A limited number of meetings were also held at Lingfield, Windsor and Gatwick, where substitute Grand Nationals were run during the period 1916–18, but northern racecourses remained closed, Newbury was turned into a POW camp and the Epsom grandstands were requisitioned by the army.

Between 1940 and 1945 flat racing was again subject to severe restrictions with fixtures sanctioned at only a handful of courses and horses banned from competing outside their own region. This time provision was made for northern racing at Pontefract and Stockton while further south Ascot, Windsor, Salisbury and Newmarket were allowed to hold meetings. The industry managed to survive without attracting criticism that it was impeding the war effort, aided by well-publicised support from the royal family – Sun Chariot and Big Game, running in the colours of George VI, won a wartime fillies' Triple Crown and the Two Thousand Guineas in 1942. The same year saw the Jockey Club take steps to reduce the size of the racehorse population to save on scarce fodder: horses of five years old and over were banned from handicaps, owners were encouraged to dispose of moderate animals especially geldings and the stock of broodmares was reduced by 25 per cent. Over 60 flat-race meetings were held in both 1943 and 1944 but National Hunt racing was less fortunate. There were no Grand Nationals from 1940 to 1945 – Aintree was taken over by American forces – and the entire jumps season was abandoned in 1942–43 and 1943–44. A limited number of race days was finally agreed from January 1945 and the Cheltenham Gold Cup was run for the first time since 1942.

In cases of cancellation resulting from weather, royal funerals or disease, replacement meetings are frequently organised by the British Horseracing Board, particularly if the original fixture included an important race. The King George VI Chase, the highlight of the Boxing Day racecard at Kempton Park, was lost to bad weather in 1995 and finally staged at nearby Sandown Park in early January. The two disasters affecting the Grand National in the 1990s, however, elicited different responses from the authorities. The 1993 race, declared void after two false starts, was never re-run but the 1997 race, abandoned on the Saturday because of an IRA bomb scare, took place instead on the following Monday in front of a small but defiant crowd. In general, re-scheduled fixtures, even for major meetings, seldom attract the anticipated numbers and revenues of the original race day and racecourse executives have cause to rue the intervention of any event that leads to abandonment.

Further reading

Mortimer, R., *The Flat* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979).

Tyrrel, J., *Running Racing – the Jockey Club Years since 1750* (London: Quiller Press, 1997).

See also Weather.

Accidents

So much can go wrong at the track and on the gallops. Horses have minds of their own and surprising agility for their size. They can rear in the parade ring, charge the starting gate, bolt, cross their legs, break blood vessels, run out at bends, or strike the heels of another runner. Even ones that are well schooled in training sometimes react unpredictably when they come to fences on the racecourse itself while back in the stables and breeding sheds lads and handlers run risks from frightened or excited horses. Jockeys can be pulled off by the

4 Africa

starting gate, fall off because of a saddle slipping, or have a rein snap so that they cannot control their mount. The condition of the course can lead to disaster if the ground is too hard or too soft or, as in September 1989 at Doncaster, if the drainage system subsides and produces deep holes in the running track. Even getting to the racecourse can be hazardous when you are driving tens of thousands of miles each year and, although no jockey has been killed flying to a meeting, Frankie Dettori and Ray Cochrane were lucky to escape with their lives in an accident at Newmarket in May 2002 in which their pilot died.

Jockey Club figures show that a fall can be expected every 14 rides over jumps and hurdles. Imagine the state of mind of a jockey who has not fallen for twenty rides knowing that one is almost inevitable in the very near future. But at least a jump jockey knows that most falls happen when his horse meets obstacles deliberately placed in its path and can be mentally prepared to take action. Flat racing has no such advance warning system and when a horse slips over at 30 mph or more, often in the midst of other 500-kilo creatures, the consequences can be severe. The 1962 Derby is a prime example when 26 runners set off but only 19 finished. A combination of poor horses falling back, good horses moving up, and badly placed horses switching position led to a crowded collision at Tattenham Corner. One horse had to be destroyed and six jockeys needed treatment, two of them suffering concussion.

One of the greatest dangers is a loose horse running out of control. The problem is worst at small tracks where the course is narrow and races take place over several laps. Sedgefield, for example, saw carnage in 1999 when three horses unseated their riders at the first fence in a novices chase and a well-intentioned, but unsuccessful, attempt to catch the leading loose horse merely headed them in the wrong direction. Had the next race not been over the flat, hurdles would still have been in place which might have halted the trio. As it was they met the rest of the field on a bend and in the collision another six horses were brought down. Three were killed instantly in what was a 60 mph crash.

Any serious accident is investigated thoroughly by the Jockey Club who will seek feedback from the jockeys on aspects of the race, from the course inspectors on the state of the ground, from the vets on the horses and from the doctors on the injured riders.

See also Safety.

Administration

See Weatherbys.

Africa

With racecourses named Newmarket and Gosforth Park and races called Queen's Plates, South African racing has obvious links with Britain. English settlers brought racing to Africa in the last decade of the eighteenth century and since then, in spite of its occasional isolation for political or medical reasons – fear of

African horse sickness led to strict quarantine conditions – there has continued to be a limited traffic in horses, jockeys and trainers between the continent and Britain. Although thoroughbred racing was also introduced to Zimbabwe, Kenya and other parts of East Africa, it has flourished most strongly in South Africa.

British punters have become more aware of the sport there since betting shops and satellite television began to feature meetings, initially when domestic racing was wiped out by bad weather. (Similar time zones allow South African races to be transmitted live in Britain during the afternoon.) But the only South African horse to have made a significant impact on the international scene has been Colorado King, who won in America in 1963, and Hawaii, a prolific winner in his homeland who became Champion Grass Horse of 1969 in the States. He went on to sire 1980 English Derby winner Henbit and 1978 runner-up Hawaiian Sound. A number of successful racehorses have gone in the opposite direction. Sunstone, son of 1911 Derby winner Sunstar, became champion sire in South Africa; Wilwyn, winner of 20 races in England and the first to capture the Washington DC International Stakes in 1952, also did well there as did Sybil's Nephew, a six-time winner and runner-up in the 1951 Derby. But in general horses exported to Africa have been moderate racers or unsuccessful sires. Royal Lancer, winner of the 1919 St Leger and Irish St Leger was shipped off to South Africa after failing as a sire in Britain; more recently Ribofilio, a son of Ribot, beaten favourite in the 1969 colt Classics and a great disappointment on the racecourse, was also sent there.

A few British riders have tried their luck in Africa. Ernie Johnson, 1969 Derby-winning jockey, also rode winners in Kenya, as well as India and Hong Kong, and Derek Stansfield, killed in a fall at Hamilton in the same year, rode regularly in East Africa. The Wootton family, trainer Richard and sons Stanley and Frank, worked in South Africa en route from their homeland, Australia, to a successful spell in Britain. Frank, aged 9 years 10 months, rode his first winner in South Africa and later became British champion jockey from 1909 to 1912. South African jockeys John Gorton and Michael Roberts also made an impact on British racing. Gorton was fortunate in his British contacts, having been apprenticed to Frederick Rickaby, son of a Newmarket trainer, and encouraged by veteran trainer Sir Jack Jarvis who maintained close links with South Africa. He rode regularly in Britain from 1969 to 1974, winning the Oaks with Sleeping Partner in 1969 and the Coronation Stakes at Royal Ascot with Jacinth in 1973. Roberts established himself in Britain in 1986, having won the champion jockey title 11 times in his native land. By 1994 he had ridden 1,000 winners on the British turf, won the King George on Mtoto in 1988 and Opera House in 1993, the Two Thousand Guineas on Mystiko in 1991 and the Oaks on Intrepidity in 1993. He was champion jockey in 1990 when he rode 206 winners.

South Africa has proved to be important for British racing in another context. The Joel brothers, Solomon and Jack, left London to make their fortunes in the diamond fields of Kimberley at the end of the nineteenth century and, with some of the proceeds, became important owners and breeders of racehorses back in Britain. Between them, they won 14 Classics and passed on

their passion for racing to their children who won a further 8, as well as consecutive King Georges in 1967 with Busted and 1968 with Royal Palace. Jack's son, Jim, in particular continued to make a significant impact on both flat and jumps racing and was one of the last great English owner-breeders, reviving the fortunes of his father's Childwick Bury Stud. He was leading owner on the flat in 1967 and in National Hunt racing in 1979–80 and 1986–87, and is one of the few to have owned both a Derby and a Grand National winner – Royal Palace in 1967 and Maori Venture in 1987.

Further reading

Magee, S., *Channel Four Racing Complete A–Z of Horse Racing* (London: Channel 4 Books, 2001).

Roberts, M. and Tanner, M., *Champion's Story* (London: Headline, 1994).

Age

Descriptions of racehorses are often age-related. A foal is the term used for a horse from its birth until 1 January of the following year, while a yearling refers to any horse during the 12 months from then to 31 December. Thereafter, males aged two to four are colts, females are fillies, racing two-year-olds are sometimes referred to as juveniles, and animals still running at five, the age of thoroughbred maturity, or older, are horses or mares according to gender.

The age at which horses normally race has varied considerably over time and according to the distance run. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was unusual for an animal to race until it was five or six years old and it often continued until it was ten or even twelve. Only mature horses were capable of competing in the gruelling 4-mile races, often run in heats, which were then in vogue. As shorter races became more fashionable, the racing age fell. The Derby, Oaks and St Leger, first run in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, were always restricted to three-year-olds, but at a time when control of racing was lax and rules often unenforceable, it was inevitable that frauds, involving the substitution of older for younger horses, would occur in these and other age-restricted races. The most notorious case was the 1844 Derby in which two of the runners were found to be four-year-olds after an examination of their teeth, the method by which age is normally determined. By the early nineteenth century, shorter races for two-year-olds, equally susceptible to fraud, had appeared and the fashion for sprints culminated in yearling races over as little as two furlongs. The Jockey Club banned yearlings from the racecourse in 1859 and gradually imposed tighter controls on the sport, reducing the possibility of age-related offences.

It has remained the norm for flatracers to start their careers at two and for most top-class horses to retire before they reach five. In human terms, this would be the equivalent of completing an athletic career while still at primary school. National Hunt racing, however, is different. Horses are not allowed to race over hurdles and fences until the age of three and four respectively but often continue until twelve or thirteen years old; steeplechasers are usually at

their peak when aged eight or nine. Unlike flat racing, there are no jump races comparable to the Classics or other Pattern races which are restricted to a specific age group. The exceptions are the relatively minor National Hunt Flat Races or 'bumpers' in which horses must be aged between four and six, and riders must not be fully-fledged professional jockeys.

All racehorses celebrate their official birthday on 1 January, a rule first introduced at Newmarket in 1834 and followed elsewhere in 1858. This means that a foal born in February 2003 will have a three-month advantage over a foal born in May in terms of maturity and development, although both will be considered as yearlings in January 2004. A late-spring foal may benefit from better grass but it can lack the physical maturity to join its older peers on the racecourse at the beginning of the two-year-old racing season, a factor of some importance given the short competitive life of the average racer. There are carefully graded rules restricting the running of two-year-olds – none, for example may race over more than 5 furlongs before June, or 7 furlongs before August – and a complicated system of weights to be carried by horses at different levels of maturity, the weight-for-age scale, applies to all races which are not handicaps. This was originally devised in 1855 by Admiral Rous, senior steward of the Jockey Club and public handicapper, modified by him in 1873, and subsequently revised by the Jockey Club. It is intended as a guide to the weights which horses should carry over specific distances, the amount increasing month by month throughout the racing season. It aims to compensate for the immaturity of younger animals, allowing three-year-olds, in particular, to race alongside older horses.

Age is an important factor in deciding the campaign of any flat racehorse but particularly a top-class thoroughbred. In most cases it will be lightly raced as a two-year-old and, if it shows promise, it may be aimed at one of the recognised Classic trials before contesting the major age-restricted races, the English, French or Irish Classics, in its three-year-old season. If it is an exceptional horse, it may transfer from age-group races to those open to three-year-olds and upwards, such as the King George or the Arc, taking on older rivals. For colts, success in any of the principal European Group One races may result in either retirement to stud, where potential fees are likely to be higher than future racecourse winnings, or a four-year-old campaign in a few carefully selected Group races, the choice dependent on the preferred distance.

The increase in international races offering large prizes has sometimes tempted owners to keep successful horses in training as five or even six-year-olds. Swain won the King George in 1998 at six, Daylami was five when victorious in the 1999 Breeders' Cup Turf, but it is now unusual for a Derby winner to continue racing beyond the age of three. Some horses are trained on because they mature too late to be Classic winners and top-flight mares may have their retirement to stud postponed, while geldings can continue to race and earn because there is no lucrative competing career. The same is true of stayers, for whom stud demand is poor and opportunities abroad more extensive. Vintage Crop was seven when he won the Melbourne Cup for Ireland in 1993.

The more modest animals which form the majority of race fields are less constrained by the age factor and, in an effort to earn their keep, may be raced more frequently in mixed-age races, sometimes over a number of years.

Moderate flatracers are sometimes campaigned over hurdles during the winter or on one of the all-weather tracks, prolonging their season and the length of their racing life; it is not uncommon to find such horses running at the age of eight. National Hunt horses, starting over hurdles and graduating to steeplechases, also tend to have long racing careers. In recent years, Grand National winners Little Polveir (1989) and Royal Athlete (1995) were twelve-year-olds while Mr Frisk (1990), Seagram (1991) and Miinnehoma (1994) were all eleven. But for versatility over a 10-year span, there is surely no better example than Sea Pigeon, winner of 16 flat and 21 hurdle races. Seventh in the 1973 Derby, he won the Ebor Handicap on the flat as a nine-year-old in 1979 and maintained a first class hurdling career throughout the winters of 1977–81, culminating in two successive Champion Hurdles (1980 and 1981).

Further reading

Magee, S., *The Channel Four Book of Racing* (London: Hamlyn, 1995).

Agents

There are two major groups of agents in racing, the bloodstock agents and the jockeys' agents, both willing to relieve, respectively, the owner or jockey of a percentage of his or her money. Bloodstock agents normally charge owners about 5 per cent of the purchase price for their advice in choosing a horse. Additionally they will sift through the sales and auction catalogues looking for a horse to suit their clients' requirements and budget, provide details of the animal's pedigree, arrange for veterinary examination and, if necessary, an independent valuation, as well as bidding for the animal in the sale ring or negotiating a private sale. The agents also help sell animals, again on a commission basis. Critics argue that many agents are no more than glib con artists, but the fact that the profession continues suggests that sufficient owners value the services provided.

One of the major pioneers was the British Bloodstock Agency, created in 1911 by journalists Edward Moorhouse, Ernest Coussell and Robert Bunsow. They published the *Bloodstock Breeders' Review* which provided information about racing and breeding throughout the world whilst simultaneously publicising their expertise and attracting clients. Over time virtually every racing country has had a champion sire imported through the Agency. These days the Agency utilises computer programming to assist its mating advisory service but whether this will ever have as far-reaching effects on the breeding industry as two deals in the mid-twentieth century is debatable. In 1938 the Agency secured Nearco for Martin Benson's Beech House Stud for the then record sum of £60,000. Fourteen years later it advised Canadian industrialist Eddie Taylor to purchase Lady Angela who was in foal to Nearco. The sale was conditional on obtaining a promise of a return nomination to the stallion. The subsequent mating produced Neartic, the sire of Northern Dancer whose progeny had an international impact on racing.

For jockeys, the commission of 10 per cent of riding fees and share of prize money paid to their agent is certainly worthwhile as it takes away the work and

worry of seeking rides. Prior to this development a top jockey could spend as much time on the phone trying to secure rides as on the horses themselves. One can only wonder at how barely literate Fred Archer managed to arrange his 667 rides in 1885. Pioneered in Britain by Willie Carson who appointed Ted Eley to work for him in 1970, the employment of an agent has become widespread and today even some apprentices, no longer subject to the restrictions of the old indenture contract, also employ them. The use of agents who offer trainers their full client list obviously reduces the opportunities for spare mounts for the lesser riders and this has encouraged them also to seek a representative.

A good agent spends time studying the form and entry books, and watching races, usually via television to pinpoint likely future mounts for his clients and also to identify those dangerous or unreliable horses that they should avoid. They also spend time and money on the phone: leading agent Dave Roberts has a telephone bill of over £8,000 a year, unsurprising as he books over 4,000 mounts a season. Agents are in a fiduciary relationship with their clients and must always act in their best interest; they can, for example, only act for one party within a negotiation. Although there is some conflict when an agent handles several jockeys, all desirous of the same ride, this is not illegal. No agent will admit to betting as this would undermine the relationships of trust and respect that they have cultivated with trainers.

Within National Hunt racing the increased power wielded by the agents has created an elite group who obtain the bulk of the rides. With less opportunity of mounts there has been a dramatic slide in registered jockeys from 149 in 1991 to only 85 a decade later. The number of conditional riders has more than halved in the same period from 196 to 92.

Further reading

McCoy, T. and Duval, C., *The Real McCoy* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1998).
www.bba.co.uk

Aintree

Aintree racecourse in the northern suburbs of Liverpool is known throughout the world as the home of the Grand National, its features and fences instantly recognised by the millions who watch the race annually on television. Yet for much of the year it is empty, desolate, one of the least used courses in Britain with only four days racing outside the famous spring festival meeting.

The chequered history of its development began in 1829 when William Lynn, a local hotelier, rented land from the Earl of Sefton for a flat race meeting. An elegant grandstand was erected and by 1835 Lynn was organising three meetings a year, including one for hurdle events. In 1836 he promoted the first steeplechase over two circuits of the 2-mile course and this race, renamed the Grand National in 1847, was held annually at the Liverpool Spring flat race meeting throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Liverpool racecourse, as it was usually known, continued to host two further flat meetings

each year, in July and November, but their popularity declined and flat racing was abandoned in 1976.

Aintree remained the property of the Earls of Sefton until 1949 when it was sold to the Topham family, clerks of the course for over a century. Although a motor racing circuit was added in 1953 to boost revenues, it closed within ten years and in 1964 the entire venture was deemed to be uneconomic by Mirabel Topham, the course manager, who proposed to sell it for redevelopment. The original contract of sale drawn up by Lord Sefton's advisers had stipulated that the land should only be used for agricultural or racing purposes and a series of legal battles ensued, during which the course facilities became increasingly run down. Great uncertainty about its future continued for nearly 20 years. Although it was eventually sold to a property developer in 1973, it was rescued in 1975, first by Ladbrokes the bookmakers, who offered to run it for the next seven years, and then by the combined efforts of the Horserace Betting Levy Board, sponsor donations and public subscription. It is now owned by the Racecourse Holdings Trust, a non-profit making subsidiary of the Jockey Club; new grandstands and a visitor centre have been built, a golf course occupies the centre of the course and the future of a national institution appears to be secure.

There are two distinct circuits at Aintree which benefit from a free-draining, sandy soil, although there is a tendency to remember the instances of wet, gruelling conditions rather than the good going on bright spring days. The Grand National course of 2 miles 2 furlongs is the longest in Britain, flat, wide and roughly triangular in layout, a track so vast that it can be difficult to see the far side from the stands. The Mildmay course of 1 mile 4 furlongs is also level and left-handed, with the hurdles track outside it, but its sharp bends make it unsuitable for the relentlessly galloping 'National' horse. Until 1975, the fences on both steeplechase courses were of similar construction but the Mildmay fences are now built in the orthodox manner from birch while the 16 Grand National fences (all but two of which are jumped twice during the big race) are made of thorn dressed with specially imported Norway spruce. A staff of 150 is required on the big race day to dress and repair the obstacles. The course is unique in terms of distance, fence type and number, and although there are numerous plain fences, the names of the more spectacular obstacles have achieved notoriety – the Canal Turn, the Chair, Valentine's and, most famously, Becher's Brook. Fierce condemnation of the perpendicular fences, labelled dangerous by some critics, first led to modifications as long ago as 1961 which resulted in sloped take-off sides. Since then further safety measures have been undertaken to reduce unacceptable drops on the landing side and in 1989 the ditch at Becher's Brook was filled in.

The enormous public interest in the Grand National tends to overshadow other events at Aintree but the spring meeting hosts several Grade One races including the Aintree Hurdle and the Melling Chase, and a total of 11 Pattern races in all. The three days of the Grand National meeting in April are the biggest draw of the jump season after the National Hunt Festival at Cheltenham in March, with crowds of over 50,000 on Grand National Day. Twenty-four hours later, the curtains have closed again on Aintree racecourse, a poignant theatre of ghosts and memories in an urban wasteland.

Further reading

Magee, S. (ed.), *The Channel Four Racing Guide to Racecourses* (London: Channel 4 Books, 1998).
 Seth-Smith, M. *et al.*, *The History of Steeplechasing* (London: Michael Joseph, 1966).
www.aintree.co.uk

See also Grand National.

Alcohol

All racecourses sell alcohol: it is seen as a significant contributor to revenue and part of the day out for many racegoers. Sometimes the bars are named after racing personalities as at Huntingdon which has the Steve Smith-Eccles Bar in tribute to the retired steeplechase jockey, the Giffords Bar named after the locally-born trainers, and the Hugo Bevan Bar honouring a long-serving clerk of the course. Or after horses as with the Lucius Bar at Carlisle, the Durham Edition Bar at Sedgefield and the Romany King Bar at Exeter.

In turn the alcohol industry has often assisted racing. Purveyors of alcohol have traditionally sponsored racing, usually at a local level as in the many Innkeepers Plates and Publicans Stakes found throughout the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century *Racing Calendars*. The alcohol trade was also to the fore in pioneering the modern era of racing sponsorship. Colonel W.H. 'Billy' Whitbread, chairman of the brewing company bearing his name, was a devotee of the turf and had completed the Grand National course twice as an amateur. He saw the commercial possibilities offered by racing and in 1957 his firm sponsored the Whitbread Gold Cup at Sandown Park to be followed in 1960 by the Mackeson Gold Cup at Cheltenham. During the 1990s Whitbread sponsored the November three-day Murphy's festival at the Cheltenham course for around £90,000, a significant sum by National Hunt standards. Seagrams were involved in the Grand National for eight years before an offshoot of the company, Martell, took over the sponsorship in 1992. Five years later they committed themselves to a package of £4.5 million to maintain the sponsorship till 2004. The Grand National, of course, is televised worldwide which provides Martell with international exposure. Hennessy Day at Newbury is another major jumping feature. On the flat, the John Smith's Cup at York, originally the Magnet Cup, is the oldest sponsored race still on the fixture list, celebrating its fortieth running as racing entered the new millennium. Further north the Northumberland Plate had the Fosters Lager imprint attached. Most but not all meetings have significant sponsorship from the alcohol trade and industry, ranging from champagne firms at Goodwood, Epsom and York to the Federation Brewery at Hexham. Overall about a fifth of racing sponsorship is alcohol related.

Champagne in particular has long featured in racing. In Champagne Stakes, common in the nineteenth century, winning owners had to give a crate of bubbly to the race committee. Jockeys too have received champagne from the early 1960s when Bollinger began to supply a dozen crates to the winner of both the Amateur and Professional National Hunt championships. For some years too the Möet and Chandon Silver Magnum for amateur riders was run over the

Derby course at Epsom. Jockeys drink champagne for both social and vocational reasons. Many believe that it is ideal for drinking in the sauna to assist the sweating process; others, like owners, trainers and racegoers, simply enjoy celebrating their victories.

Unfortunately some riders face alcohol problems because of the nature of their work. Every time jockeys race they are subject to public and employer appraisal; they are constantly watching their weight; and they anticipate injury each time they get on a horse. No wonder that so many appear to have used alcohol to escape reality or as a painkiller. Apocryphal stories abound for the nineteenth century. Charles Marlow is said to have lost a two-horse race for the 1850 Doncaster Cup on the odds-on favourite The Flying Dutchman because he was drunk; and, after a morning at the brandy bottle, Bill Scott is alleged to have been so intoxicated at the Derby of 1846 that he did not realise that the race had started. It is clear that Scott, winner of nine St Legers, and George Fordham, 14 times champion jockey, were alcoholics as was Tommy Loates, champion in three seasons towards the end of the century, Bernard Dillon, the Derby-winning rider in 1910, and perhaps American 'Skeets' Martin who tended to hit the bottle. In the modern era both Walter Swinburn and Steve Cauthen have acknowledged that they had drink problems. National Hunt riders, with notable exceptions such as teetotallers John Francome, Tony McCoy – despite being sponsored by Guinness – and Jonjo O'Neill, see drinking as part of the social life associated with their sport, and regard it as a means of winding down. Whether the stress or culture of their working lives contributes to jockeys resorting to alcohol more than other workers remains conjectural in the light of current research. The effects of alcohol are often aggravated by the lack of food; significantly both Cauthen and Swinburn were alleged to be bulimic. Although the idea of a drunken jockey aboard a horse is a frightening one, the Jockey Club took no action on this issue till October 1994 when, at the instigation of Michael Turner, their new chief medical adviser, a protocol was developed for the testing of riders for banned substances. These include alcohol, the threshold for this initially being set at the drink-driving limit but later reduced to half that level. Initially done by urine sample, breathalyser tests were introduced in 2003.

Further reading

Collins T. and Vamplew, W., *Mud, Sweat and Beers* (Oxford: Berg, 2002).
 Smith Eccles, S. and Lee, A., *Turf Account* (London: Queen Anne Press, 1986).
 Tanner, M. and Cranham, G., *Great Jockeys of the Flat* (Enfield: Guinness, 1992).

See also Inns.

All-weather racing

All-weather racing takes place on an artificial surface composed of sand and synthetic fibres instead of turf and, though popular overseas, was not introduced to Britain until 1989. It was originally intended to provide opportunities

for both flat and jump racing and to ensure an income for the racing and betting industries during the winter months when frost, snow and waterlogging often caused the abandonment of race meetings. From modest beginnings, it now operates all year round at three tracks but is restricted to flat racing, accounting for nearly one-fifth of all flat-race days. This figure will rise if controversial proposals for new all-weather tracks in Essex and South Wales are finally approved or if existing venues such as Newmarket and Newbury are allowed to develop all-weather tracks.

All-weather racing was the Jockey Club's response to concerns in the 1980s about the number of meetings – and consequently income – lost during the months of January to March. With significant financial backing from the Horserace Betting Levy Board, the first tracks opened in the autumn of 1989 at two existing racecourses, Lingfield Park and Southwell, to be followed in December 1993 by Wolverhampton which pioneered Saturday evening races under floodlights. Although hurdling took place until 1994, it was suspended following a number of injuries and fatalities to horses. It was found that the artificial surfaces, Equitrack at Lingfield Park and Fibresand at Southwell and Wolverhampton, were less yielding than turf, resulting in more serious falls and breakages, and it has never been re-introduced. Instead the number of flat-race fixtures has steadily increased; in 2004 there were over 200, mainly concentrated from November to March but with 25 per cent taking place during the remaining months.

Fog, flood and high wind can occasionally lead to the abandonment of all race meetings and such weather conditions have beaten even artificial race-tracks. Frost also causes the dirt surface to become crusty and lumpy, requiring constant harrowing to break down the clods and the early use of toxic anti-freeze material had to be abandoned after it was alleged to have caused cases of poisoning. However, the winter of 2001, which was exceptionally wet with several spells of sub-zero temperatures, played havoc with the drainage at the artificial courses. Design defects together with age and lack of adequate maintenance, particularly at Lingfield, brought several abandonments of the all-weather, disparagingly referred to in the press henceforth as 'flat racing on sand – formerly known as all-weather racing'.

Although in reality the three all-weather courses lost fewer than 20 fixtures in their first 10 years of operation, the high-profile adverse publicity given to the spate of call-offs in 2001 resulted in the complete refurbishment of the Lingfield track at a cost of £3 million. The new surface, Polytrack, is a mish-mash of recycled material, sand and polyester fibres woven together and coated with wax. A similar mixture had already been used for training gallops at Lambourn and Newmarket, and since its unveiling at Lingfield, there has been a very positive response from trainers and jockeys alike. A great advantage of Polytrack is the lack of kickback which used to leave horses and riders covered in lumps of wet sand (or occasionally clouds of dust!).

The amount of prize money available at all-weather meetings has always tended to be low, attracting horses of very moderate ability. Initially, this led to unflattering comparisons with dog racing and complaints from purists that the races, which can be extremely competitive and run at high speed, did little to

improve the image of racing or the riding skills of jockeys. In recent years, however, a number of more valuable Listed races (Class A, just below Group level), together with some Class B and C contests have been added to the standard lower grade D to F races which make up most all-weather programmes. The Wulfrun Stakes at Wolverhampton, worth over £31,000 to the winner, was the first Listed race to be run on an artificial surface in 1997. The arrival of the new track at Lingfield brought with it increased prize money – the opening day in November 2001 saw two races for over £20,000 – and purses in general have increased at the three Arena Leisure-owned all-weather venues. Money has also been found for a trainers' and jockeys' championship, won in the inaugural season by Nick Littmoden and Jimmy Quinn, and although there are acknowledged all-weather specialists, many top-class handlers now send runners to these tracks. Even at the lower grades, there is sufficient money to be made in dirt racing to attract the type of horse that used to be destined for novice hurdling and there are fears that, in the long run, some poorly funded National Hunt fixtures will suffer.

While the more strident critics have yet to be won over, this branch of racing has also become increasingly popular with owners and spectators. Apart from providing opportunities for less successful or less experienced horses and jockeys, the all-weather racecourses offer modern facilities and aim to attract a wider public than many traditional venues. Although crowds were initially small, 2,000–3,000 spectators can now be found at Boxing Day and New Year's Day fixtures, at least the equal of an average jumps meeting, and all-round demand has been sufficiently high for the British Horseracing Board to sanction applications for new tracks. Several venues plan to offer evening racing under floodlights which has proved highly successful at Wolverhampton.

Although it takes place throughout the year, all-weather racing comes into its own during cold snaps or wet winters. When severe Christmas weather wiped out the Boxing Day programme at ten racecourses in 1996, emergency fixtures were brought in at the dirt tracks, admission prices were reduced and trainers were able to keep horses fit when their home gallops were frozen. This pattern of substitute meetings has been maintained in recent years and horses raced on the all-weather have often performed better at the start of the flat season in March than those denied the opportunity. It may be equine roulette in the eyes of its detractors but all-weather racing has had a significant impact on the racing year.

Further reading

- Magee, S., *The Channel Four Racing Guide to Racecourses* (London: Channel 4 Books, 1998).
 Wilson, J., in Armytage, G. and Seabrook, M. (eds), *Turf Accounts* (London: Gollancz/Witherby, 1994).

Amateur riders

The amateur participates in sport for fun. Certainly this must be the case in racing where the accident rate in point-to-point, the branch of horseracing

solely for amateurs, is higher than in the professional branch of jump racing. Some amateurs, both in point-to-point but more often in National Hunt racing, are aiming for a career as a professional. Nevertheless most unpaid riders over the sticks are genuine amateurs in the accepted sense of the word, men and women who simply love their sport, its fellowship and traditions.

Historically there are rare examples of successful amateurs in flat racing such as 'Squire' Abington in the nineteenth century and Mr George Thursby, one of the few gentleman riders who could get down to less than 9 stone, which he did to finish second twice in the Derby, on John O'Gaunt in 1904 and on Picton two years later. However, few amateurs were prepared to sacrifice the good life sufficiently to ride at flat-race weights.

This was less often the case in National Hunt where jockeys can be heavier. Amateurs started steeplechasing and even when professionals came into the sport some could hold their own, among them Arthur Yates who won 460 races, double Grand National winners Maunsell Richardson and Ted Wilson, Arthur Coventry who became an official Jockey Club starter, and Roddy Owen who had 254 winners from 812 mounts in the decade from 1882 and then gave up racing after winning the 1892 Grand National on Father O'Flynn. Amateurs won 12 of the 15 Grand Nationals between 1871 and 1885 and five from 1885 to 1897. They were successful in three more before the First World War. In the interwar years unpaid riders – a few reputedly more expensive to hire than professionals – continued to take a leading part in the sport and in season 1926–27, for example, over 150 of them rode winners over hurdles and fences. In 1946 the first postwar Grand National was won by an amateur, Captain Bobby Petrie, recently demobilised from the Scots Guards, who brought home 25–1 outsider Lovely Cottage. Champion amateur rider in this year and the succeeding ones until his accidental drowning was Anthony (later Lord) Mildmay. At 6 ft 2 in he was no stereotype jockey but, having given up a career in the City to devote himself to steeplechasing, he could compete with the best as indicated by his fourth place in the overall National Hunt riders championship in 1946.

Earlier amateurs had won that title, though the last was Harry Brown in 1919. Today their target is the Amateur Championship, sponsored by Bollinger from 1963–64, the year it was won by Stephen Davenport. Among the other winners has been American George Sloan who for the 1977–78 season put aside a successful business to cross the Atlantic and become a full-time amateur rider in a determined campaign to lift the trophy. In 1999 the Amateur Jockeys Association decided not to follow the National Hunt precedent of ending the season in April but to continue with the traditional date in early June. Otherwise they feared that the hunter chase campaign, a core part of the amateur riders' season would be cut in half.

National Hunt racing remains one of the few sports in which the amateur can flourish even against professional opposition, though a permit system is in operation to ensure that only the fit and competent are allowed to compete. Since the 1960s the racing authorities have also adopted a policy of advising the most successful amateurs to turn professional on the grounds that they were depriving paid riders of their income. Among those so counselled have been

Terry Biddlecombe and Michael Scudamore, both of whom went on to win the professional championship. The Jockey Club now also requires owners to pay them the equivalent of a riding fee – which goes to charity – when they employ an amateur who has had 75 rides in races open to professionals. Such competition is not even allowed on the flat and, apart from novelty events, there are now no opportunities for amateurs to race against their paid counterparts in this branch of the sport. National Hunt amateurs can race against each other on the flat in bumper races, designed to give racecourse experience to potential hurdlers without the off-putting risk of falls, and there are occasional flat races solely for lighter-weight amateurs but it is in the point-to-point fields that the unpaid enthusiasts find their real home.

Further reading

Kidd, J. and Oaksey, J., *The Race for the Championship* (London: J.A. Allen, 1979).
 Lee, A., *Jump Jockeys* (London: Ward Lock, 1980).

See also Baird, Point-to-Point.

American invasion

In 1895 a solitary American jockey, the Afro-American Willie Simms, rode in British racing and secured four wins, insufficient to rank him in the top 50 in the jockeys' championship, but the product of merely 19 mounts, a winning percentage amongst the highest in the land. Simms's visit was a precursor for an American invasion of the British turf in which a handful of men, small in stature but large in influence, revolutionised British racing.

Lester Reiff came over for a spell in 1896 and had 16 winners. Next to arrive was Tod Sloan. On his first short visit in autumn 1897 he had 53 mounts and won on 20 of them. He returned the following autumn, again as the punter's friend, with 43 winners out of 98 mounts. The shocked British experts argued that if Sloan came over for a full season it would be a different story. It was. His strike rate fell from 43.9 to 31.3 per cent but his 345 mounts yielded 108 victories placing him near the head of the jockeys' table. By 1900 four of the top ten riders in the championship were from the United States, including champion jockey, Lester Reiff. Nineteen-year-old Danny Maher arrived late that season and secured 27 wins from 128 rides, a sign of the talent which was to secure him the jockeys' championship in 1908 and again in 1913.

Most of the Americans were outstanding jockeys, but their ability was not the sole reason for their remarkable success in Britain. They brought with them a new style of racing and riding which could be distinguished at a glance. English jockeys rode in a similar style to the hunting field, sitting erect with a comparatively straight knee and a good length of rein; in contrast the Americans pushed the saddle forward, shortened both the stirrups and the reins, and rode with knees bent, crouching along the horse's neck. By cutting wind resistance and giving a better weight distribution on the horse, the monkey-on-a-stick style of riding was worth several pounds advantage. The Americans also brought a different style of

racing. British jockeys had often raced almost half-paced in the earlier stages of a race and then swooped in the final furlong or so. Champions such as Sam Chifney, George Fordham and Fred Archer were all famous for their waiting game in which they came with a late rush to the winning post. In contrast the Americans often raced from the front if they felt their mount could cope with the pace. Indeed the fact that Sloan was frequently 'out on his own' led to 'on your tod' entering the English language. Most of the Americans were remarkable judges of pace because American trainers made more use of the stopwatch than their British counterparts who generally preferred to try their horses out against each other. The similarity of many American flat tracks made comparison of times more meaningful than in Britain where 'horses for courses' was a fair working rule.

The American jockeys also benefited from a concurrent invasion by American trainers. In the three years 1898–1900 John Huggins trained the winners of 162 races and was champion trainer in 1899; in 1900 Enoch Wishard headed the list of trainers with 54 winners; and his fellow-American, W. Duke put 31 into the winner's enclosure. Although American training methods contributed to their success with horses having better shoes fitted and being given more fresh air than was common in British establishments, the Americans also had skill in the use of drugs. American race meetings lasted for ten days or more and horses raced several times at one meet, leading to the use of dope to stimulate tired animals. Those who came to Britain were not averse to supplementing their training methods with the application of drugs to give their horses a further advantage. At the time doping was not a turf offence in Britain.

By 1902 the American invasion was virtually over. The success of Sloan and company and the growing employment of many lesser-ranked Americans persuaded British jockeys that they too had to take up the American style of riding and racing. Initially the pure American style was adopted but, although it was a decided improvement on the traditional British upright seat, it was not ideal for British courses that were more undulating than the American flat tracks. Difficulties in rebalancing horses led to a host of accidents and objections for foul riding. Soon, however, modified versions of the American seat appeared: the end result was that stirrups in general remained shorter than formerly, but the knees of most jockeys did not overlap the withers of their mounts, nor were reins grasped as tightly or held so close behind the ears as in the original American style.

The stay of the Americans was brief. Simms rode only that first season; Lester Reiff came back to ride from 1899 to 1901; his brother Johnny for the same three years; and Tod Sloan for only two full seasons. By 1902 only Danny Maher and 'Skeets' Martin were riding regularly in Britain but they were still successful: Maher third in the championship with 106 wins (and the highest winning percentage of 23.5) and Martin fourth with 80 wins. Significantly Maher had changed his style and taken up the Anglo-American seat. Equally significant Maher was regarded as respectable whereas many of the others had a blatant disregard for the rules of racing. Lester Reiff, champion jockey in 1900, was warned off by the Jockey Club in October 1901 for not trying to win

at Manchester and Sloan, following an official reprimand for gambling which was against the rules of British racing, had it intimated to him that he need not bother to apply for a renewal of his licence the following season. Maher took up residence in Britain and continued to ride with success even when British riders adopted American techniques. In 1903 he was never out of the places in the Classics and won both the Derby and the St Leger on Rock Sand. In 1906 he was victorious in the Derby again, this time on Spearmint, and in the Oaks on Keystone II. Between 1900 and 1914 Maher rode 1,331 winners in Britain with a winning percentage of 25.3. Eventually he succumbed to tuberculosis, virtually the industrial disease of jockeys exacerbated by their constant efforts to lose weight. Martin also continued to ride in Britain with some success though he never challenged Maher as the leading American rider.

Further reading

Dizikes, J., *Yankee Doodle Dandy: The Life and Times of Tod Sloan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

Vamplew, W., 'The American Invasion of the English Turf: A Study in Sporting Technological Transfer' in Toleneer, J. and Renson, R. (eds), *Old Borders, New Borders, No Borders* (Leuven: Meyer and Meyer, 2000).

See also Jockeys, Race riding.

Anti-racing lobby

Historically most of the objections to horseracing have centred on its association with gambling, both as a vehicle for betting in its own right and, in the nineteenth century, in the gaming booths rented out to thimblemen and card-sharps to bring in revenue for the prize fund. Such arguments had three thrusts. Morally, gambling was evil and the poor and gullible (often the same) needed protection; economically, gambling was an unproductive waste of resources; and socially it was linked with crime. Not only was it an illegal activity itself for many years but also it was associated with stealing by gamblers to finance their addiction and, more recently, with money laundering on the racecourse.

It was not just gambling that concerned the anti-racing lobby but also the other disreputable activities which race meetings generated. In the nineteenth century race weeks were a major event in the local social calendar and almost everywhere they resulted in an influx of prostitutes, an expansion of gaming houses in the locality, and a rise in uninhibited and inebriated behaviour, some of it criminal. Racing was held responsible for this and other frowned-on behaviour: for the pick pocketing that occurred in the large crowds, for the passing of counterfeit coinage in the hurried trading between races, and for the unholy trinity of betting, drinking and lack of sexual restraint associated with the sport. Employers also claimed that the local races led to staff absenteeism, to their mind an even worse crime!

As gambling has become more socially accepted – and government approved – and as racecourses have dampened the worst of the social misbehaviour, the

opposition to racing has switched from a concern about the misdeeds of humans to one about the welfare of horses. Opposition to racing now comes mainly from animal rights activists. They believe racing is cruel, particularly National Hunt racing which asks a half-ton animal to leap a fence at 30 mph carrying a man on its back. Some argue that forcing horses to race is an act of cruelty in itself; others object more to the whipping and the injuries and deaths that occur. Campaigners consistently target horseracing for its exploitation of horses, a matter which intensifies after incidents at high-profile events such as the Grand National Meeting at Aintree in April 2000 where four horses were killed on the first day or the Cheltenham Festival the previous year where four horses also died. Groups such as Fight Against Animal Cruelty in Europe and the Animal Aid Society hold poster and leaflet campaigns outside betting shops, protest at race meetings (particularly at Aintree on Grand National day), and petition both racing and parliamentary authorities. In 1989 they persuaded Labour MP Tony Banks to table an unsuccessful House of Commons motion calling for the Grand National to be banned unless the Aintree course passed the safety standards demanded by animal welfare groups. They have no truck with racing apologists who argue that without the sport there would be no thoroughbreds to protect, nor with the view that the horse has died doing something that it instinctively wants to do and for which it is rewarded by being well looked after all its life. It has not helped racing's image with these groups that the British Horseracing Board gave financial support to the pro-hunting lobby.

Using its website as its public face, the Jockey Club has mustered arguments to defend its sport against the allegations of cruelty. Perhaps it is justified in pointing out that horses are herd animals and galloping alongside one another is a natural inclination. It is on less safe ground when it defends the use of the whip for safety, correction and encouragement but then argues that disciplinary action is taken against riders who apply it incorrectly. This implicitly accepts that abuse and cruelty does occur. The Club argues that the quality of life enjoyed by the racehorse is better than virtually any other animal in Britain and that most receive care and devotion far beyond that given to most domestic pets. The horses get individual attention from a loving lad or lass, all the food, drink, clothing and bedding they require, regular exercise on custom-made training grounds and expert veterinary care. They even get an annual rest or holiday! The Club even utilises the poor economic condition of the sport to argue that few people come into racing for the money; that it is the love of working with horses that attracts them not financial reward.

It is a sad fact that while high-profile, televised events can publicise racing's best qualities they can also bring the downside of the sport into living rooms across the country. When ten horses die at the 1996 Cheltenham Festival, three are killed in the 1998 Grand National and four lose their lives in a single day at Aintree in 2000, it can only strengthen the case of the animal activists. Following the death of the three horses in the 1998 Grand National the RSPCA stationed inspectors at each obstacle the following year to assess if the fences were 'jumpable'. Yet, despite a record of over one-third of the starters failing to finish and almost 30 equine fatalities since 1946, the Society has been reluctant to condemn the Grand National, perhaps because the event

is part of Britain's sporting heritage. It has, however, criticised aspects of the race, particularly the structure of fences, the number of horses allowed to start, and the problem of rider-less animals. More generally regular discussions are now held with the Jockey Club and relevant course managements to improve safety standards and reduce risk to horses. Nevertheless many in the racing industry believe that a legal challenge to the existence of horseracing for inflicting cruelty on animals is inevitable.

Further reading

Huggins, M., *Flat Racing and British Society 1790–1914* (London: Cass, 2000).
www.thejockeyclub.co.uk

See also Whipping.

Apprentices

Most licensed jockeys are either apprentices or conditional riders. An apprentice is a young flat-racing jockey who is tied by an annual renewable contract to a trainer from whom he will learn the skills of race riding. The National Hunt equivalent is a conditional rider. He or she can sign an agreement at 16 but cannot ride as an apprentice beyond the age of 24. Historically they were bound to their trainer by legal agreement for up to seven years, but by the 1970s an apprenticeship had been reduced to a minimum of three years. Until two decades ago apprentices were indentured to a trainer with whom they had to stay till they completed their articles. Today they have the freedom to switch stables, though, at the insistence of the Jockey Club, they are not allowed to race ride for the remainder of the season unless both trainers agree.

In the early twentieth century the Jockey Club introduced weight allowances for apprentices in recognition of their inexperience. Outstanding apprentices and conditional riders can thus do well. In 1923 Charlie Elliott was champion jockey whilst still an apprentice, as was Elijah Wheatly 18 years before him. During the Second World War the Jockey Club, fearing a shortage of jockeys in the post war years, brought in a sliding scale of apprentice weight allowances. Seven pounds could be claimed until six winners had been ridden, 5 lb till 20, and 3 lb till 40 winners or the apprentice had reached the age of 21. Many trainers responded to this cue and in 1951, 84 apprentices aggregated over 300 winners. Unfortunately in this period National Service proved a major bugbear to many trainers as their diminutive apprentices often returned muscled out and too heavy for a riding career. Under the scheme operating since 1991, the allowance is reduced progressively, disappearing completely after the total of winners reaches 85.

'Losing one's claim' to an allowance is a major rite of passage after which the young rider has to compete on ability alone. Even a leading apprentice has no guarantee of future success. Lester Piggott (1950), Pat Eddery (1971), Kevin Darley (1978) and Frankie Dettori (1989) were all champion apprentices who went on to become champion jockeys. Frankie Durr, joint champion

apprentice in 1945, went on to ride over 2,000 winners. But who recalls David Coates or Richard Dicey, joint champion apprentices in 1968, or even the 1994 champion apprentice, Stephen Davies, winner of 45 races when attached to Henry Cecil's stables but who has since disappeared from the British racing scene?

It was in the training stables that the apprentices were supposed to be taught the skills of jockeyship: how to be smart out of the stalls, how to balance a horse, how to judge pace, and how to use the whip both left- and right-handed. Some stables, especially those with ex-jockeys on the staff, have taught apprentices how to race ride. Indeed where an apprenticeship promised the trainer half the boy's earnings it was in his interest to do so. Men such as Frenchie Nicholson, Ernie Davey, Sam Armstrong, and Major F.B. Sneyd, a first rate but hard teacher, from whose Sparsholt stables brothers Doug and Eph Smith and Joe Mercer graduated, earned a reputation as well as an income from their ability to produce good, young riders. Even those trainers who cared for their apprentices did not have an easy task in bringing on the boys, partly because they had no parental influence. Some got homesick and dispirited; others cocksure, unruly and unmanageable. Unfortunately, as is acknowledged in the industry, too many trainers simply regarded apprentices as cheap stable labour and would not give them the chance to ride in public. Not that this was always the trainer's fault; many owners were reluctant to put up a youngster, even with a weight allowance. Willie Carson, commenting on becoming champion jockey in 1972, noted that 'there may be a dozen others as good as me who will never be heard of because they did not get the chances I did' (Ayres and Newbon, p. 120). From the 1920s races solely for apprentices were developed to help budding jockeys to gain some race experience. These days any course that holds more than four days of racing is obliged to put on at least one such event. There are also 'bumper' races during the National Hunt season which are flat races for jumping horses ridden by apprentices, conditional riders or amateurs. Nevertheless the apprentices are riding alongside other novices not experienced jockeys from whom they might learn in the unforgiving environment of a race.

An alternative to in-house tuition was provided by training courses for apprentices which began in the early 1970s at Great Bookham near Leatherhead in Surrey. They were financed by the Horserace Betting Levy Board (HBLB) and by trainers of the 12 apprentices who attended each six-week course. In 1974 further courses financed by the HBLB commenced at the National Equestrian Centre at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire. They were for girls who wished to become apprentices and school-leavers who came from a non-racing background but were interested in a career in the industry. Neither significantly changed the face of apprenticeship and in the early 1980s an enquiry by John Marriage Q.C., onetime Home Office representative on the Levy Board, recommended the establishment of an apprentice training school. Yards were getting too big for traditional apprenticeship schemes to operate effectively as there was no time to offer proper tuition.

The British Racing School at Newmarket and, to a lesser extent, the Northern Racing College at Rossington Hall near Bawtry, took on this task. Purpose built at a cost of £1.5 million, the British Racing School came into

being in 1983. Its first director, Major Barney Griffiths, a successful amateur rider himself, ran it like a boarding-school-cum-stables, attempting to replicate stable routine and stressing the importance of manners and smartness. In the late 1990s about a quarter of those trained have gone on to ride as apprentices. Four of the last six champion apprentices have come through the School. When the apprentices lose their 7-pound allowance they are given a three-day intermediate course dealing not so much with riding as with career management, money matters, interview techniques, fitness and diet.

The old apprentice system has now gone along with what many believed to be over harsh discipline, but, with nothing to tie an apprentice to the stable, the incentive to pass on advice and give young riders a chance has been weakened. Indeed, most apprentices are now virtually freelance riders and, though many trainers no longer take half their earnings, they no longer pay half their expenses. Most apprentices earn very little money for an outside chance of becoming a well-paid jockey. Money and fame tempt many to try, but throughout the history of racing the majority of apprentices have failed to become licensed jockeys. Of the 187 apprentices registered in 1900, only 75 became jockeys and a mere 23 (12 per cent) continued as such for more than three years. Little has changed. Current director of the British Racing School, Rory MacDonald, estimates that nine out of ten budding apprentices fail to become full professional jockeys.

Further reading

Ayres, M. and Newbon, G., *Under Starter's Orders* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1975).

Magee, S., *The Channel Four Book of Racing* (London: Hamlyn, 1995).

www.brs.org.uk

See also Jockeys.

Arabian horses

When British breeders of racing horses in the seventeenth century decided that their stock needed improvement, it was to the Arab breed that they turned. Arabs, selectively bred by the Bedouin for centuries, were small, seldom more than 15.2 hands high, tough, and possessed both speed and stamina. No fewer than 150 stallions of Eastern blood were said to have been imported to Britain in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries although some of these were Turks or Barbs, related to the Arab breed. Poorly maintained records and name changes have led to difficulties in identifying and tracing the subsequent development of the thoroughbred but three horses in particular, the Byerley Turk, the Darley Arabian and the Godolphin Arabian, had a major impact on the evolution of the modern racehorse.

The Byerley Turk, foaled around 1680 of predominantly Arab blood, was captured from the Turkish army at Buda in 1687 and brought to England by Captain Robert Byerley. Said to have seen action at the Battle of the Boyne

in 1689, the horse was sent to stud first in Durham and then in Yorkshire. His bloodline was established by his grandson, Partner, the best racehorse of his day at Newmarket, and his great-grandson, Herod, who sired the winners of over 1,000 races in the late eighteenth century. Two recent Derby winners, Blakeney (1969) and Dr Devious (1992) can trace their descent from the Byerley Turk.

The Darley Arabian was sent to England in 1704 as a four-year-old. A bay of 15 hands with a white blaze and three white feet, he had been bought in Syria by Thomas Darley for his father, James. He remained at stud on the Darley family estate in Yorkshire for around 25 years. He sired Flying Childers, said to be the first great English racehorse, and his brother Bartlet's Childers, the grand-sire of Eclipse, and through them he is the ancestor in the direct male line of the vast majority of modern thoroughbreds. Northern Dancer, the most influential stallion of the late twentieth century, is descended from the Darley Arabian and, in naming their management company Darley, the Maktoums have acknowledged his early impact on British bloodstock.

The Godolphin, another name brought to the forefront of modern racing by Sheikh Mohammed's racing operation, may have been a Barb, similar to an Arab, and is thought to have come originally from the Yemen. A brown horse of less than 15 hands, he was a gift to Louis XV of France, and was bought in 1729 as a five-year-old by Edward Coke of Derbyshire. After Coke's death in 1733, he was acquired by Lord Godolphin and spent over 20 years at his stud near Newmarket where he produced Lath, one of the best racehorses of the 1730s. His grandson, Matchem, became one of the greatest sires of the eighteenth century and his bloodline, though less robust than that of the Darley Arabian, can be traced to Santa Claus, winner of the 1964 Derby.

Although these three stallions have traditionally been credited as the founding sires of the English thoroughbred, other Arabian horses may also have been influential. The Leedes Arabian features more commonly in the pedigree of most modern thoroughbreds, and the Curwen Bay Barb, bought from Louis XIV of France and noted for his impact on female lines, may have been undervalued in the past because nineteenth-century breeders discounted the female contribution to the development of the horse. Research undertaken in the late 1970s also noted that genealogical lines are not the same as genetic contributions to a breed. The findings confirmed that 80 per cent of modern thoroughbreds can trace their descent from the Darley Arabian in the male line but discovered that the total genetic contributions of the three founding stallions was little over 25 per cent.

The Arab horse has also featured on the racecourse in its own right. Although it was bred for racing in France for more than 100 years, it was developed largely for showing in Britain, where Arab racing had proved to be unsuccessful in the eighteenth century. It was not until the mid-1970s that the Arab Horse Society, with the approval of the Jockey Club, resurrected races for Arab horses. A split within that body in 1999 and the formation of a new group, the Arabian Racing Organisation, has recently led to a situation in which the Arab Horse Society continues to be the sole registration authority for Arabian horses in Britain and the new organisation is responsible for

administering all Arab racing. Sometimes Arabian horseracing is tacked on to existing thoroughbred meetings but in many cases an entire race day is devoted to this branch of the sport. Sponsorship by the Maktoums and other Middle Eastern families has enabled it to expand from purely amateur beginnings to semi-professional status, with a mixture of amateur and professional trainers and jockeys, vastly increased prize money, and the kudos of racing at venues such as Epsom Downs, Newbury and Newmarket.

Further reading

Herbert, I. (ed.), *Horse Racing* (London: Collins, 1980).

Holland, A., *Stride by Stride* (London: Queen Anne Press, 1989).

See also Eighteenth-century horses.

Archer, Fred (1857–86)

No one seeing Frederick James Archer for the first time would have recognised him as a jockey. At 5 feet 10 inches he was tall for a flat-race rider and in winter he weighed nearly 11 st. Yet possibly he was the greatest jockey of all time in British racing. During his brief career, cut short by his suicide before he reached 30, he rode 2,748 winners (from 8,084 mounts), including 5 Derby victories and 16 other Classics. He also rode over 200 winners in a season seven times, a record no other rider has come near.

He was the second son of William Archer, a steeplechase rider who won the 1858 Grand National. Both his older brother William and younger brother Charles also became jockeys, the former dying of injuries received in a fall at Cheltenham. Fred attended school only intermittently and in later years relied on friends to write his correspondence. How he coped with organising the hundreds of mounts he took each season is a matter for conjecture. His racing education was provided first by his father but primarily by Mathew Dawson, the Newmarket trainer to whom he was apprenticed in 1868 and for whom he became stable jockey in 1873. At the age of 12 he won his first race, a steeplechase at Bangor, and the following year his first victory on the flat, on Athol Daisy at Chesterfield. Four years later he was champion jockey and remained so for 13 consecutive seasons.

He was a good judge of pace and of horses. Riding in the traditional upright English stance, he possessed marvellous hands and the ability to read a race. Competitive and determined, he rode hard, driving finishes in which he gave no quarter to rival jockeys – he once put his own brother through the rails. Especially in his early career, he was also severe on his mounts with whip and spurs. Yet he was suspended only once, in 1871 at Newmarket, for misconduct at the start.

His riding success made him wealthy and he left an estate valued at over £60,000. As an apprentice he obtained only 9 guineas in his first year, rising to 13 guineas in his fourth and fifth years, but, at his peak as a jockey, he earned around £8,000 per annum. Most of this came from retainers to secure his

services and from presents from winning owners. It was alleged that he was involved in a jockeys' ring to fix races but there is no evidence of this. However, he did use his judgement of horses and riders to good effect in advising a betting syndicate. His love of money led to him being known in some quarters as 'The Tinman', tin being contemporary slang for currency. Yet he returned the balance of his retainer to the Duke of Portland when His Grace demanded that Archer end his association with George Baird, the brash son of a Scottish ironmaster, who was doing his best to outride and cuckold British racing society.

His death shocked racing. While riding in Ireland Archer had received a telegram from the Duchess of Montrose, owner of St Mirin, stating that 'my horse runs in the Cambridgeshire. I count on you to ride it'. Archer needed little persuasion. The Cambridgeshire was the one big race that had eluded him. He had been racing in Ireland at 9 st 4 lb but undertook to ride at 8 st 6 lb, a reduction of 12 lb in less than a week. He attempted to achieve this by not eating at all on three days, counteracting the intake at other times by doses of a purgative, especially devised for him by Dr Winter, a Newmarket physician, and, when not riding, making use of the Turkish bath attached to his Falmouth House residence. He still failed to make the weight by a pound and when he lost the race by only a head the overweight rider blamed himself. The effort to lose weight left him so weak that when riding on Wednesday 3 November at Brighton, eight days after the Cambridgeshire defeat, he contracted a chill, which he aggravated by insisting on fulfilling his engagement at Lewes the following day. He left that course in an extremely weakened state and was diagnosed on the morning of Monday 8 November as suffering from typhoid fever. The date was the second anniversary of his wife's death in childbirth. That afternoon his sister, who was taking care of him, heard a noise in his bedroom and found Archer with a revolver. She attempted to disarm him but he placed the muzzle in his mouth and fired. He died a victim of illness, depression, and wasting. Newmarket came to a halt for his funeral and the streets were lined with thousands paying their respects.

His record of 246 winners in the 1885 season was not broken until 1933, by Gordon Richards, by a macabre coincidence on the anniversary of Archer's death.

Further reading

Murray, A., *Race to the Finish, The Life and Times of Fred Archer* (London: Robson, 2003).
 Welcome, J., *Fred Archer: A Complete Study* (London: Lambourn Press, 1990).

See also Nineteenth-century jockeys.

Architecture

Early thoroughbred racing took place without the formality of permanent race-course structures. The aristocracy viewed the proceedings from horseback or from carriages while others, as can be seen in early eighteenth-century paintings, simply stood around. By the mid-1750s some supporters of elite racing were

prepared to pay for the privilege of watching from more exclusive and weather-proof surroundings. The first grandstand at the Knavesmire racecourse in York was designed and built by John Carr in 1754 after 250 gentlemen had subscribed £5 each. A quarter of a century later the same architect was commissioned to design and oversee the construction of a grandstand at Doncaster which cost more than £2,500. Another early Georgian edifice at Richmond racecourse, where top-class racing ceased in 1891, was built in 1775 by public subscription. Even some small courses established permanent buildings with the help of wealthy benefactors. Kelso races in the Scottish borders benefited from the support of the Duke of Roxburghe who not only purchased land for a new course but funded a handsome stone grandstand with elegant arches and elaborate ironwork. Completed in 1822, it is still in use today and must be one of the few racecourse stands to contain a coal fire in the ladies' powder room! The original royal stand at Ascot, to a design by John Nash, the architect of London's Regent Street, was erected in the same year and the first at Epsom took shape in 1830.

During the Victorian era racecourse grandstands were amongst the largest structures in which crowds regularly gathered. Racing art of the period depicts numerous examples of large canopied buildings several stories high and viewing galleries crammed with spectators, many perched precariously on the top level, completely exposed to the elements. (The Edwardian stand at Ludlow and the 1974 creation at Cartmel are still roofless.) There was also an assortment of stewards' and judges' boxes, weighing rooms, clock towers, ornate entrance gates and little lodge houses, all built in local material of red brick, stone, timber or thatch embellished with wrought iron. Many of the structures became increasingly dilapidated or unsuitable for twentieth-century racegoing and have been replaced, as at Newbury and Leicester. Some stands, such as Warwick, are listed but have been sympathetically converted to present needs. Some survive with altered functions; the elegant columned and carved Georgian edifice at Doncaster is now a weighing room. Others, faded but recalling Victorian and Edwardian splendour, have been superseded by state-of-the-art facilities, and now incongruously play host to the least affluent patrons of the racecourse instead of the local gentry.

The last 25 years have seen a profusion of glass and concrete additions and replacements to racecourse architecture. The March Stand at Goodwood, opened in 1980, won the annual Concrete Society award. The Queen's Stand at Epsom, unveiled in 1992, won an architecture award from the *Financial Times*. Several Millennium grandstands have recently sprouted into life (Newmarket, Wetherby) and premier tracks such as York and Cheltenham seem to be in a permanent state of rebuilding. There has been substantial investment at many courses like these which come under the umbrella of the Racecourse Holdings Trust, an arm of the Jockey Club, while others have benefited from interest-free loans by the Horserace Betting Levy Board. Improvements are also ongoing at the tracks owned by the major commercial groups currently involved in racing (e.g. Arena Leisure, Northern Racing) and also at smaller independent venues such as Musselburgh, Stratford and Towcester.