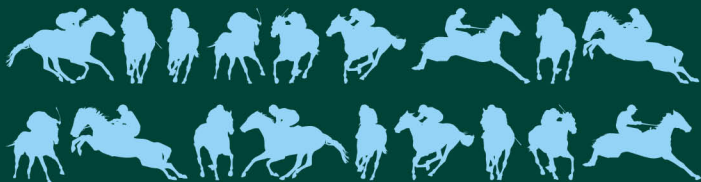


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RACING POST



100 WINNERS



JUMPERS TO FOLLOW – 2022-23

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Sixty-first year of publication

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JUMPERS TO FOLLOW 2022-23

(ages as at 2022)

ADAMANTLY CHOSEN (IRE) 5 b g

Given Adamantly Chosen's pedigree is full of stamina – he's by Well Chosen out of a Shernazar mare with smart jumper Adamant Approach further down the dam's side – the 5yo has done well to win both a bumper and a maiden hurdle over 2m. He was stepped up in trip straight after that hurdle victory for his handicap debut and fared better than the bare result suggests when 11th of 23 in the Martin Pipe Conditional Jockeys' Handicap Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival and he bettered that effort on his final start of last season at Punchestown (2m3f) in late April, making up plenty of ground in the last half mile to be nearest at the finish behind Camprond. He was sent off favourite for the Galway Hurdle on his first start of the new season in July and, although unable to figure over 2m, he left the impression he would make up into a good-quality handicapper over 2m4f and beyond and he's also bred to jump a fence in due course. WILLIE MULLINS

AHOY SENOR (IRE) 7 b g

If Ahoy Senor, who is by Dylan Thomas out of a mare who has produced a pair of stout stayers in Snuff Box and Daranova, can brush up his jumping, there's no reason why he won't be able to mix it with the best staying chasers around in the coming season. This highly regarded sort, who won a Grade 1 on only his second start over hurdles, was switched straight to fences last season and he was in the process of running a fine race in a traditionally strong Colin Parker Intermediate Chase when sprawling on landing and unseating his rider at the penultimate fence. He quickly made amends in a Newbury Grade 2 on Ladbrokes Trophy Day but the switch to both Grade 1 company and the sharper Kempton track found him out in the last half mile on Boxing Day when he made a series of errors and had to settle for second behind Bravemansgame. A bloodless victory in the Grade 2 Towton in February set him up nicely for a tilt at the Brown Advisory at the Cheltenham Festival and, given he made errors at a crucial stage, he deserves plenty of credit for getting as close to L'Homme Presse as he did. With both Bravemansgame and L'Homme Presse underperforming, he faced a fairly straightforward task to beat Fury Road in an Aintree Grade 1 on his final start in April, but he did it nicely from the front. This imposing sort has reportedly done well over the summer and his seasonal reappearance – possibly in the Charlie Hall at Wetherby – is eagerly awaited.

LUCINDA RUSSELL

ALAPHILIPPE (IRE) 8 b g

Fergal O'Brien's star is definitely in the ascendancy and last season's total of 128 winners and prize money totalling almost £1.38m was easily his best on both fronts since he took out a training licence. He joined

forces with fellow Gloucestershire trainer Graeme McPherson from October 2021 and the partnership has plenty to look forward to this time round. One who could raise his game even higher is the already smart Alaphilippe, a Morozov half-brother to 2m4f chase winner Born For War, who confirmed that he retains all his ability despite a campaign that was restricted to just two starts. The 8yo shaped well after a break of 300 days in a Pertemps qualifier at Warwick in January and failed by only a neck to win the Pertemps itself at the Cheltenham Festival, in the process pulling a few lengths clear of the remainder. He's 4lb higher but, although he's the type to win again over hurdles, there's plenty of chase blood in his pedigree and it wouldn't be a surprise to see him go novice chasing this season. Whichever route he goes down, it will be a surprise if he doesn't win more races. FERGAL O'BRIEN

ALTOBELLI (IRE) 4 b g

Named after the striker who scored the third goal for Italy in the 1982 World Cup Final, which they won 3-1 against West Germany, Altobelli came in for significant market support when making his debut in an Exeter bumper in February. He duly ran out a comfortable winner from Ginny's Destiny, who would frank the form by winning his next start at Chepstow. Altobelli's trainer had not been sure that his charge would handle the soft underfoot conditions, so jockey Bryan Carver was instructed to give the 4yo a very patient ride and he carried out those tactics to perfection, bringing the gelding through late on to win without knowing he'd been in a race. Fry said afterwards: 'Although it wasn't the strongest bumper, you couldn't ask for a better debut and I will not be rushing him out again quickly.' It's possible that his initial target for this season will be a Class 1 bumper at Cheltenham in November, after

which hurdling will be on the agenda. He has plenty of size and scope and he should become a useful jumper.
HARRY FRY

AMERICAN MIKE (IRE) 5 b g

Such was the reputation of American Mike, backed up by the visual displays of effortless victories in a point and on his first two bumper starts in 2021, he started as the 5-2 second-favourite for the Champion Bumper at Cheltenham in March. This Mahler half-brother to 2m6f hurdle winner One Fine Man came unstuck that day behind the market leader and potential top-notcher Facile Vega, but he at least matched the form of his previous efforts and he showed a willing attitude in the closing stages. The 5yo took on Facile Vega and the rest of the Mullins battalions at Punchestown again but he ran as though feeling the effects of the Cheltenham race, finishing nearly 12l further behind that rival than on their meeting at Prestbury Park. However, he should be a different proposition in the coming season and he already looks a leading contender for the Ballymore, with the step up to 3m expected to suit if his pedigree is anything to go by. He remains a really exciting prospect. GORDON ELLIOTT

APPRECIATE IT (IRE) 8 b g

It was always going to be a big ask for Appreciate It to win the Champion Hurdle after exactly a year on the sidelines, but, despite not being able to justify odds of 100-30, he ran a good race, beaten by just over 9l by Honeysuckle, which was more than respectable in the circumstances. It may not have been the best Supreme Novices' Hurdle that he won in 2021, but it was hard not to be impressed with the way he won it and he is clearly built to be a chaser. That had been the plan until he had a setback earlier in the season, which tempted

Willie Mullins to keep him over hurdles and preserve his novice status over fences for this season. It's worth remembering that he was the 4-1 ante-post favourite for the Arkle prior to his setback and he's now 10-1 for the same race next season, and that looks a fair price. Providing he has a smoother preparation, he is surely capable of developing into a leading contender for that race this season. **WILLIE MULLINS**

ASHDALE BOB (IRE) 7 b g

An imposing gelding who also featured on these pages a year ago, Ashdale Bob must have broken a mirror at some point as he couldn't quite get his head in front throughout the season, despite running a string of good races. It all started in November when, while in the process of giving Bob Olinger and Bacardys a serious race, he blundered and unseated his rider three out when looking certain to be at least placed. He then ran another perfectly good race next time over 2m4f at Navan in early December but he couldn't quite get to Farouk D'Alene and Blue Sari. He admittedly had an off-day after that in late December, finishing last of seven finishers behind Fury Road in a Grade 1 Chase over 3m at Leopardstown, but he quickly bounced back to run another cracker back over hurdles at Gowran Park a month later, finishing third behind Royal Kahala and Home By The Lee in the Grade 2 Galmoy Hurdle, with Klassical Dream just behind him in fourth. On his next start in February he was headed on the line by Thedevilscoachman in another Grade 2 Hurdle at Navan before finishing an excellent third in the Coral Cup at Cheltenham behind shock winner Commander Of Fleet. His final start of the season was in the Grade 1 Champion Stayers' Hurdle at Punchestown, where he finished 1½l behind a revitalised Klassical Dream, with the likes

of Gentlemansgame, Sire Du Berlais, Paisley Park and Concertista all in behind. He's essentially an out-and-out stayer on the evidence of those runs and hopefully he can be found suitable opportunities over the winter to finally break his losing run. It would be no surprise to see him line up in the Stayers' Hurdle in March and he'd have a decent each-way chance in that based on what we saw of him last season. JESSICA HARRINGTON

AUTUMN RETURN (IRE) 5 b m

Ruth Jefferson has had mixed fortunes since taking the trainer's licence from her late father Malcolm, but she's a most capable operator who, like the name of her former Grade 1 winner Waiting Patiently, always gives her horses plenty of time. Sold for £55,000 after winning an Irish point on her third start, Autumn Return, a Fame And Glory half-sister to useful 2m-2m5f hurdle winner Ferrobin and 2m1f chase winner Minella Hub, was prominent in the market and showed a determined attitude to win a traditionally strong Ayr bumper on her debut under Rules and on her first start for Jefferson in April this year. The bare form of that renewal doesn't look anything out of the ordinary, but the 5yo should benefit from a step up in trip when she goes over hurdles this season, and there's enough in her pedigree to suggest she'll jump a fence further down the line. She's open to plenty of improvement and can win away from the better types in novice company before going on to ply her trade in handicaps. RUTH JEFFERSON

AUTHORISED SPEED (FR) 5 b g

Although his record reads one win from five starts in bumpers, this half-brother to a couple of winners on the Flat and over hurdles in France (out of a French middle-distance winner) was one of the better performers around in that sphere and he's a good prospect for

hurdles this term. Word was out that he had plenty of ability as he started at 6-5 favourite for his debut run at Market Rasen last May and, although unable to justify his position at the head of the market behind Grozni, he showed more than enough after being hampered to suggest that he'd win a race. His reputation was enhanced in Listed company at Ascot on his next outing seven months later before he bolted up (beating a Paul Nicholls newcomer and an Alan King previous winner) by upwards of 10l in January. The 5yo ran to a similar Raceform rating back in Listed company and back at Newbury just over three weeks later before finishing fifth in the Champion Bumper behind Facile Vega and American Mike, faring best of the British contingent. There's jumping winners in his pedigree and he's the type to do well in this new discipline. We look forward to seeing him again. GARY MOORE

BALCO COASTAL (FR) 6 b g

A disappointing favourite for the Grade 2 bumper at the 2021 Aintree festival, Balco Coastal put his career back on track by winning by 6l on his hurdling debut at Huntingdon in December. That race, over 2m, has already worked out well and Balco Coastal did his bit for the form by defying his penalty in workmanlike fashion at Ludlow at the end of the same month. He then finished a good second (with the hood left off) behind North Lodge in a Grade 2 over 2m4f at Cheltenham at the end of January, but the suspicion was that he didn't quite see out the longer trip. He was sent off favourite for the Imperial Cup at Sandown on the back of that run, but he weakened quickly from two out and was soon pulled up, with his trainer confirming afterwards that the soft ground at Sandown didn't suit his charge at all. He bounced back to form on good-to-soft ground at Aintree in a Grade 3 handicap over

2m4f, where he finished third behind Langer Dan and Fils D'oudairies. He didn't enjoy the clearest of passages from the second-last, but he probably wouldn't have finished better than third in any case. Perhaps 2m4f stretched his stamina again, so, in the circumstances, it was a satisfactory effort and it proved his Sandown running to be all wrong. He's been dropped a pound by the handicapper after that third place and there's still mileage in his new handicap mark of 133 over hurdles but, as a former Irish pointer, he may soon be switched to fences and it's easy to see him rating a little bit higher in that discipline. NICKY HENDERSON

BALLYGRIFINCOTTAGE (IRE) 7 b g

The Bristol Novices' Hurdle, which was run at Cheltenham in mid-December and won by Blazing Khal, has worked out well with the runner-up Gelino Bello winning the Grade 1 Sefton Novices' Hurdle three starts later in April, while the third, fourth and fifth all won races subsequently. The only horse making his Rules debut that day was Ballygrifincottage, and he outran his odds of 22-1 as he finished just over 6l behind the winner in third, having led as they approached the final obstacle. This three-time point winner duly confirmed the promise of that initial outing by comfortably beating High Stakes, a subsequent winner, over 2m7f at Lingfield in January. That was on heavy ground but he had no problems with much faster conditions at the Cheltenham Festival as he fared best of the British contingent in the Grade 1 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle, ultimately finishing fourth behind The Nice Guy, Minella Cocooner and Bardenstown Lad. Harry Skelton had trotted out the 'whatever he achieves over hurdles is a bonus' line after his Lingfield win, which augurs well for what now lies ahead. Clearly he's not ground dependent so we can expect to see him in

novice chases at around 3m in the autumn. Perhaps a return trip to Cheltenham in March is already being mapped out for him – he’s currently 33-1 for the Brown Advisory Novices’ Chase on the Wednesday, but he may also be worth a second glance in the National Hunt Chase on the opening day, for which he is currently 25-1. DAN SKELTON

BARDENSTOWN LAD 7 ch g

John McConnell, who is a qualified vet, began training racehorses in 2001, although it took him four years to get off the mark. He now supplies a steady stream of winners from his County Meath base where he has been for about a decade. One of his rising stars last season was Bardenstown Lad, a bumper winner in March 2021 who won four of his first five hurdles starts between July of that year and February 2022. Having won a maiden hurdle over 3m at Wexford in July and a novice hurdle over 2m6f at Cartmel in August, he simply found 2m5f 170y at Navan an insufficient test of stamina as he finished a close third behind Tullybeg and Edison Kent in September. He was then stepped up to 3m at Cheltenham in October and got the better of Dragon Bones, running out a determined winner, which is always a good trait in a stayer. He probably didn’t have to improve on that when following up in a three-runner novice under a penalty at Musselburgh in February. However, his next start at Cheltenham in the Albert Bartlett Novices’ Hurdle produced a career best as he finished third behind The Nice Guy and Minella Cocooner, staying on stoutly once again without ever looking likely to lay a glove on the two classier horses who finished ahead of him. Afterwards, a representative for the trainer said: ‘We’re delighted with the run. The ground was probably a bit slow for Bardenstown Lad, but he’s a

big chaser in the making.' He took on the first two in the Albert Bartlett again at Punchestown in another Grade 1 but his race ended early as he fell at the second. He's certainly one to look forward to as he now embarks on his chasing career and, given that he's unlikely to beat The Nice Guy Or Minella Cocooner in the Brown Advisory Novices' Chase at Cheltenham, he may be worth siding with in the National Hunt Chase, for which he is a general 20-1. JOHN MCCONNELL

BEAUPORT (IRE) 6 b g

Although Beauport, the first foal of a close relation to a 2m4f-2m6f hurdle and chase winner Oscar Barton, won only one of his five starts over hurdles last season, he quickly made up into a smart performer and he's the type who could raise his game if he goes down the novice chasing route this season. This well-built 6yo, who is certainly bred to jump a fence, improved steadily throughout last season and his best run came when he scored over 2m4f at Uttoxeter on Midlands National Day in March, form that was franked by the subsequent win of the third Panic Attack. Although he couldn't build on that effort from a 6lb higher mark over 3m 149y, the longest trip he's tackled, at Aintree in April on his final outing of the season, he ran a bit better than the bare facts suggest after meeting a bit of trouble turning for home. He has age on his side, he's in very good hands and he's sure to win more races.

NIGEL TWISTON-DAVIES

BLAZING KHAL (IRE) 6 b g

After Blazing Khal won his first three starts over hurdles, including two Grade 2s at Cheltenham over 2m5f and 3m in November and December, trainer Charles Byrnes was already making comparisons with his previous Cheltenham Festival winner Weapon's Amnesty, who

won the Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle in 2009 before returning to the scene of his victory a year later to add the Grade 1 RSA Chase. Following his bloodless win in the Grade 2 Bristol Novices' Hurdle in mid-December, Blazing Khal was chalked up as the 4-1 favourite for last season's Albert Bartlett and he had been expected to contest a Grade 1 at the Dublin Racing Festival in February beforehand. However, in late January it was announced that the gelding had suffered a minor setback and that he would therefore miss both Leopardstown and Cheltenham, although the trainer was at that stage planning a comeback at the Punchestown Festival in late April. That comeback run didn't materialise however, so it is hoped that the extended time off has allowed the 6yo to make a full recovery. He is now likely to be switched to fences and, given what Weapon's Amnesty achieved, it would be foolish to underestimate him at 20-1 for the Brown Advisory Novices' Chase (formerly the RSA Chase). CHARLES BYRNES

BOOMBAWN (IRE) 5 b g

Dan Skelton is now firmly established in the upper echelons of the training ranks, having finished in the top three in the jumps trainers' championship for each of the last four seasons and earning more than £2m in total prize money for the first time last season. His Boombawn, by Dylan Thomas out of a dam who has several French jump winners in her pedigree, looks a likely candidate to add to the yard's prize money this time around judged on his performances as a novice hurdler last season. His two wins at Southwell and Ffos Las (on good, made all both times) at prohibitive odds didn't tell us much about him, but the 5yo looks the type to win races in handicap company judged on his final effort of the season at Sandown when chasing home Knappers Hill, an unbeaten bumper

horse who was notching his fourth victory over hurdles. Boombawn starts the current campaign on an official rating of 122, which should afford him plenty of winnable opportunities and his pedigree suggests he'll stay further. DAN SKELTON

BRIDGE NORTH (IRE) 6 b g

Fourth in an Irish point in April 2021, Bridge North looked in need of the experience on his first two starts over hurdles over 2m5f at Ludlow in November and at Sedgefield over 2m4f in early December, but he made rapid strides from that point onward. First, he finished a staying-on second behind Green Book, a future Grade 3 winner, at Ludlow in a handicap over 2m5f and the following month he went one better over that same C&D when edging out Phantom Getaway, with a couple of future winners well beaten off. Stepped up to 3m, he was pulled up in the River Don Novices' Hurdle at Doncaster at the end of January, but it was reported that he had made a respiratory noise and he was given wind surgery. He made a winning return from that break in a three-runner novice at Bangor in March, pulling right away from Silver Flyer over 2m3f 123y, which would have already been the bare minimum for him. He was stepped up in trip and class on his final start and finished a respectable fifth of 14 at odds of 80-1 behind Gelino Bello in the Grade 1 Sefton Novices' Hurdle over 3m 149y, where he was noted as staying on better than many. It's likely that he will now be switched to fences and, given his upward trajectory over hurdles, he should soon be winning races, particularly as he starts tackling staying trips. HENRY DALY

BRING ON THE NIGHT 5 ch g

Before Bring On The Night next runs over hurdles, he may take up an engagement in the Group 1 Irish St Leger at the Curragh in September. This dual

French Flat winner, who also has plenty of French Flat winners in his pedigree, won easily on his hurdles debut and first run for the yard after an absence at Naas in February but, as was the case with all the beaten horses, he was made to look pedestrian behind Constitution Hill in the Supreme Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham in March. The 5yo looked to have decent prospects for his final hurdle run at Punchestown, but he wasn't at his very best, despite dropping down in class, ultimately finishing fifth behind El Fabiolo. He ran a fine race back on the Flat when touched off by subsequent easy winner Coltrane at Royal Ascot (2m4f), but he'll need a big step forward to give himself any chance in the Irish St Leger and he looks more a Cesarewitch type, a race which his trainer has won three times in the last four seasons. Whatever happens on the Flat, he's one to look out for when he goes back over hurdles and presumably when he steps up to 2m4f or beyond. There's a decent handicap in him before he goes up in grade. WILLIE MULLINS

CALL OF THE WILD (IRE) 5 b g

The wide-margin winner of a Huntingdon bumper in May 2021 which has worked out well, this half brother to stablemate Chatez was touched off by Onemorefortheroad on his hurdles bow at Stratford in October, but he probably would have won had he not got the last flight all wrong. The pair had pulled a mile clear of the rest and the winner went on to win his next two starts so it was a decent effort all in all. Call Of The Wild made no mistake next time at Kempton in November, getting the better of Petrossian in a three-runner novice hurdle over 2m. He was next seen at Doncaster in March where he comfortably beat Boombawn on heavy ground over 2m 128y and that rival franked the form by winning his next two. He