



Mondays with DAVID ALLAN



Summer on the July Course.

Heat, fans, Goodwood, a Newmarket win and fans of The Unforgotten

THE trouble with writing an article on a Sunday evening when in the UK is the nagging thought that I am going to have to watch Poldark and Unforgotten at 2 and 3 in the morning on Catch-Up.

Early a.m. on Monday is the sacrificial lamb to my journalistic duties for Turf Talk, having finished an article around 1am then watched those two hour-long programmes that simply cannot be missed.

The other "trouble" for the past couple of months has been to remember that very un-British action of putting the fan on. The evening-at-my-laptop time has cooled, for the past two months, from 30s to 20s then not much less when it comes time to try to sleep.

There were no South Africans present for the July Festival in Newmarket as we have already discussed. There were, however, some in the country for Glorious Goodwood last week, properly

dressed in blazers and panama hats enjoying, I believe, that unique and "glorious" setting. The feel of Goodwood does not seem to have been affected by the ubiquitous evidence of Qatari sponsorship of everything. Not so much Lord March and the Duke of Richmond, but more the Qatari cash however – like Tower Bridge – it doesn't matter who owns it, it ain't going anywhere. Similarly the Qatar sponsored Sussex Stakes, one of the world's brilliant mile contests, ain't going anywhere.

Deep and meaningful discussions may go on about the politics of the situation. The 7 year old Lightning Spear (Qatar Racing) beat the 3 year old Expert Eye owned by Prince Khalid Abdullah of Saudi Arabia (aka Juddmonte). That may make your **(to p2)**



Sunrise, May Morning, Magdalen College, Oxford singing, er, Christmas Carols. Of course.

DAVID ALLAN (cont...)

eyes water when contemplating what Saudi is saying and doing about Qatar with the word "Isis" cropping up in every sentence. And they don't mean the tranquil stretch of the Thames that renames itself Isis while running through Oxford, with life-forming memories of punting, picnicking and diving in at dawn on May Morning in full evening dress after a night on the banks. Such traditional lunacy is emphasised by the choir of Magdalen College singing Christmas Carols atop the tower at bang on 6am (on, yes, May Morning). Eccentricity reigns.

But it doesn't reign at Goodwood. Lightning Spear was cheered home enthusiastically because he deserved the Group 1 win and his young owners seem to love it all.

Purists would automatically sniff at an older horse winning a Group 1, assuming that he is a gelding. "A waste of the Pattern" they might say. But here, the winner being 2.33 times as old as the 2nd made him a gallant top class hero who is still an entire! Hooray! "P'raps we should send a mare?"

A fast ground son of Pivotal would be something good to support depending on the fee in this instance. Anyway, it wasn't so long ago that Solow won the Group 1 Queen Anne at the Royal Meeting and he isn't going to sire any winners.

Two days ago, your correspondent did not go to Goodwood but budgeted three hours to drive from base to Newmarket instead of the usual 1.75 hours. It was Friday. It was 30+ degrees. The school holidays have started. Everyone heads for the coast and clogs up the roads. Well, actually, everyone heads for anywhere seeking the Great British Day Out and blocks up all roads.

Having lived for nearly 20 years in Japan, I am ever mindful of the sheer joy of being in an air-conditioned car. There, families would leave on a Friday KNOWING that they would spend seven hours in the car covering a two hour drive, but preferring not to swelter in a small, hot flat.

Similarly, I planned to listen uninterruptedly to a brilliant Test Match at Edgbaston while taking the traffic nonsense in my stride. A good thing I did! It took four hours, even on back roads, but I remained



The Goodwood kit.

serene in my 19 degrees until pushing open the door on arrival at Induna Stables – note the Zulu name, future patrons...

The outside temperature in the shade was 33. Wham. Not very British, that. Better than 47 in Spain and Portugal though.

The staff toting heavy buckets of feed, individually measured and adapted by the trainer and Head Lad for each horse's personal requirements, wore as little as was decently possible going through the motions of "Evening Stables". Some of them scrubbed up extremely well in time to lead up on The July Course a couple of hours later, even if pronouncing themselves exhausted after twenty laps of their charges spooking at the overhead tree fronds in surely the loveliest pre-parade ring of all.

Changing out of my in-the-car kit in favour of Goodwood-esque blazer and chinos, I took up an early spot on the deck of the Runners' Lounge. Then, we won our 8.30 pm race for our syndicate partners under a superb ride from James Doyle, nursing our Chris Wall-trained fellow who was not keen at all on the Good to Firm, safe but quick underneath. The very definition of winning snugly.



9pm on The July Course after a win.



Top rider James Doyle winning on Ice Lord Friday in Hintlesham Racing UK silks... R 6,000 per month...

DAVID ALLAN (cont..)

Although still 30 degrees at 10pm, cooling a little, the drive home was as quick as you like. Twelve hours later, flights to South Africa then to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were booked.

I went to school with Robin Ellis who played the original Captain Ross Poldark (which needs to be said with a slight Cornish twang). He now plays a far, far older character in the current series while Aidan Turner now squires Eleanor Tomlinson (who has a

real brother called Ross, without the twang) as the fascinating Demelza.

But the season ended last week, so I only have Unforgotten to watch in the dead of night tonight.

Nicola Walker of Spooks, Last Tango in Halifax and The Split is immaculate in Unforgotten, with thoughts and slight reactions flickering across her face giving a clue to everything but no certainty. You must concentrate...which is hard at 1am onwards but absolutely necessary... **tt**



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