



AINTREE

A Jockey Club Racecourse

**Factfiles for all 40 runners in the  
2016 Crabbie's Grand National**



# Aachen (GB) 12-10-10

**Breeding:** b g Rainbow Quest – Anna Of Saxony (Ela-Mana-Mou)

**Breeder:** Darley

**Born:** April 11, 2004

**Owner:** Tony Bloom

**Trainer:** Venetia Williams

**Jockey:** Henry Brooke

**Form:** 11103/P3/0/695P7/1/416P9/P31P4-411209

\*Bred for a Flat career by Sheikh Mohammed, by one of Europe's top sires out of the very smart racemare Anna Of Saxony, winner of a Park Hill Stakes.

\*Won four minor middle-distance Flat contests in France before being recruited as a jumper as a four-year-old for 90,000gns at Tattersalls in Newmarket. His current owner bought out his partner Harry Findlay for £30,000 a year later.

\*Has won eight times over obstacles, on soft or heavy ground. The best of his five victories over fences was his most recent, a wide-margin defeat of Wonderful Charm over three and a quarter miles in a Grade Three handicap chase at Cheltenham in December.

\*His most recent run was ninth in a veterans' chase at Newbury, with Pineau de Re and Alvarado in front of him. Has yet to visit Aintree; tends to front-run and has never fallen or unseated.

**Race record: Starts 38; Wins 12; 2nd 1; 3rd 5. Win & Place Prize Money: £174,856.**

## Tony Bloom

**Background:** Hugely-successful gambler Tony Bloom, 46, is the owner and chairman of Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club, having purchased the team in 2009 and subsequently invested a reported £200 million into the club. Bloom grew up in Brighton and attended the nearby Lancing College before graduating with a degree in mathematics from Manchester University. After brief spell with Ernst & Young and as an options trader, he decided to concentrate on gambling full-time. He was head-hunted by Victor Chandler and took charge of the bookmaker's Asian handicap markets, working in Bangkok and Gibraltar. He made a significant sum after leaving Victor Chandler by setting up online bookmaker and poker websites during the early 2000s, including Premier Bet, which was founded in 2002 and sold to Interactive Gaming three years later, plus lucrative poker sites Tribeca Tables and St Minver. He has also gained a reputation as a formidable poker player, and has accrued more than \$3.3 million during his career, making him the 13th most successful UK poker player of all time. He utilised his poker moniker "The Lizard" to set up Starlizard – a Camden-based consultancy company that specialises in providing information in Asian handicaps and Total Goals markets - in 2006. As well as investments in Brighton & Hove Albion and Starlizard, Bloom also has a significant portfolio of residential and commercial properties throughout the world. He is married to Australian-born psychologist Linda, who founded the charity Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis after being diagnosed with the condition in 2002. **Racing interests:** Started owning racehorses with fellow professional gambler Harry Findlay in 2008 – the pair won the Wokingham Handicap at Royal Ascot with High Standing in 2009 - although they decided to dissolve the partnership soon afterwards, due to differing commitments and objectives. Bloom has continued to have runners under his own name and has enjoyed several major Flat successes, including Sandown Park Group Three winner Triple Impact and Shahwardi, who took the Group Two Herbert Power Stakes in Australia. His best Jump horses have included Little Josh and Aachen, who have both won major handicap chases at Cheltenham. Bloom has also supported racing at Brighton Racecourse, most notably through the Harry Bloom Memorial Trophy, named after Tony's grandfather, to whom he attributes his love of football and gambling.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners**

## Venetia Williams

**Born:** May 10, 1960, **Background:** Venetia Williams had a great deal of experience as an assistant trainer and rider before taking out a licence to train at her family's Herefordshire estate. She had 10 winners as an amateur through 1986-88 and rode in the 1988 Grand National on Marcolo, who knocked her unconscious when coming down at Becher's Brook. She broke her neck in a fall shortly afterwards and was forced to retire on medical advice. She gained experience around the world to further her knowledge of training, starting off with seven years as assistant to John Edwards at Sellack, only a few miles from where she is now based. She also had spells with Martin Pipe and Barry Hills, John Fulton in the United States and Colin Hayes in Australia. **Training Career:** She began with a string of limited size and talent but her success prompted great reaction and she regularly trains over 50 winners a season, recording a seasonal best of 90 in 2012/13. The popular grey Teeton Mill was her standard-bearer in the late 1990s, winning the 1998 Hennessy Gold Cup and King George VI Chase. Her first venture on the Flat yielded a Group Three winner when Stretarez won the 1998 Ormonde Stakes at Chester. She has recorded six wins at the Cheltenham Festival, the first of which being Samakaan in the 2000 Grand Annual Challenge Cup, and enjoyed the pinnacle of her career to date when winning the 2009 Grand National with 100/1 chance Mon Mome. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1997 Don't Light Up (Fell 13th), Celtic Abbey (Unseated 15th); 1998 Celtic Abbey (Fell 5th); 1999 General Wolfe (12th); 2000 Kingdom Of Shades (16th); 2001 Inis Cara (Fell 4th), General Wolfe (Brought Down 8th); 2002 Inis Cara (PU Bef 25th); 2003 Bramblehill Duke (Fell 2nd); 2007 Sonevafushi (PU Bef 29th), The Outlier (Unseated 19th); 2008 Mon Mome (10th) ; 2009 MON MOME (WON), Stan (Fell 7th); 2010 Mon Mome (Fell 26th), Flintoff (PU Bef 21st); 2012 Mon Mome (PU 22nd)**

## Henry Brooke

**Born** Tadcaster, October 31, 1990 **Background:** Brooke was raised at Easingwold, Yorkshire. His mother Julia, who rode in point-to-points under her maiden name of Platts, ran a pre-training yard which also housed a veterinary clinic before taking out a training licence. Henry's brother, Danny, rode in pony races and is a trainee livestock auctioneer and sheep breeder/dealer. Henry's first ride in a race - in a point-to-point - came on Pikachu Blue, a horse that was gifted to him as a birthday present by trainer Sue Bramall. He finished third on that debut, but it took him another two seasons before he broke his duck in points. He flirted with Flat racing and had 14 rides on the level in 2010 and 2011. He became a conditional jockey and now rides as a freelance, having spent four years with Cholmondeley-based Donald McCain. Brooke won the conditional jockeys' championship with 41 winners in 2011/12. In December, 2015, Brooke rode Highland Lodge to win the Grade Three Betfred Becher Chase for trainer James Moffatt.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2013 Across The Bay (14th); 2014 Across The Bay (14th); 2015 Across The Bay (PU 25th)**

## Ballycasey (IRE) 9-10-06

**Breeding:** gr g Presenting - Pink Mist (Montelimar)

**Breeder:** R Tanner

**Born:** April 19, 2007

**Owner:** Susannah Ricci

**Trainer:** Willie Mullins IRE

**Jockey:** Ms Katie Walsh

**Form:** 1/113/114F/2173PB-4935

\*Was brought down at the Canal Turn when in midfield on the first circuit in 2015 Crabbie's Grand National when a 25/1 chance.

\*Career highlight came when beating this year's Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup hero Don Cossack by four lengths in the Grade One Dr P J Moriarty Novice Chase at Leopardstown in February, 2014.

\*Sole victory since came in two and a half mile chase at Gowran Park in November, 2014

\*His dam is out of a half-sister to 1995 Grand National winner Royal Athlete.

\*Has yet to win beyond two miles and six furlongs, but has been placed over three miles on several occasions.

\*Last seen out when a staying-on fifth in the Grade Three Brown Advisory & Merriebelle Stable Plate over two miles and five furlongs at the Cheltenham Festival on March 17, 2016

\*The most recent of three greys to win was Neptune Collonges in 2012. Before that were Nicolaus Silver (1961) and The Lamb (1868 & 1871).

**Race record: Starts: 18; Wins: 6 2nd: 1 3rd: 3 Win & Place Prize Money: £132,774**

### Susannah Ricci

The Ricci family horses run in the name of Susannah, wife of American banker Rich Ricci. They live in Kent but have their racehorses trained in Ireland. Rich Ricci, (born August, 1963) gained a bachelors' degree in finance from Creighton University in Nebraska and progressed to senior positions at the Bank of Boston and the Bank of New England. Moved to England to work for Barclays in 1994 before being appointed chief operating officer of the bank's global investors in 2002. In 2012, he became co-chief executive of Barclays corporate and investment banking. He resigned from Barclays in April, 2013. He is now chairman of freemarketFX (since February, 2016) and bookmakers BetBright. His first racing inspiration came when he stood by the rail at Suffolk Downs in Massachusetts, USA. He started to own Jump horses after watching Clare Balding on BBC television. Through a friend, Pat O'Riordan, he met Willie Mullins, Ireland's champion Jump trainer, and began ownership with Scotsirish in 2005, initially racing as Double R Stables. The first of over 250 winners trained by Mullins in the Ricci name was Pomme Tiepy at Cork in December, 2007. The Riccis, who have around 50 horses in training with Mullins, have won the last two renewals of the Stan James Champion Hurdle courtesy of Faugheen (2015) and Annie Power (2016) and have enjoyed a total of 13 winners at The Festival at Cheltenham, including five in 2015 - Annie Power, Douvan, Vroum Vroum Mag, Vautour and Limini.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2011 The Midnight Club (6th); 2012 The Midnight Club (11th); 2014 Vesper Bell (13th); 2015 Ballycasey (HMP & UR 8th)**

### Willie Mullins IRE (Bagenalstown, County Carlow)

**Born** September 15, 1956 **Background:** A six-time champion amateur rider in Ireland, his successes in the saddle included the 1983 Fox Hunters' Chase at Aintree on Atha Cliath (among the also-rans were Robert Waley-Cohen, chairman of Cheltenham Racecourse, and former Aintree Racecourse chairman Lord Daresbury). As a jockey in the Crabbie's Grand National, his rides included The Ladys Master, who ran out in 1983, and Hazy Dawn, who fell at the sixth the following year. He hails from one of Ireland's most famous racing families, being a son of the late Paddy Mullins, the outstanding all-round trainer whose most dazzling star was Dawn Run, winner of the 1984 Champion Hurdle and 1986 Cheltenham Gold Cup. **Training Achievements:** Mullins, who took out a training licence in 1988, has been Ireland's champion trainer 10 times, and will win an 11th title this season (and ninth in a row). He has won most of the major prizes in Britain and Ireland, and several in France as well. He has 48 Cheltenham Festival successes to his credit, including Champion Hurdles with Annie Power, Faugheen, Hurricane Fly, and an extraordinary eight in the Champion Bumper, starting with Wither Or Which (which he also rode) in 1996. He has been leading trainer at The Festival for five of the last six years (seven winners this year and a record eight in 2015) and lies second on the all-time list of most successful trainers behind Nicky Henderson. Mullins' star performer in the early part of the century was Florida Pearl, who was placed in two Cheltenham Gold Cups, won the 1998 RSA Chase, the 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2004 Irish Gold Cups in Ireland as well as the 2001 King George VI Chase and the 2002 Betfred Bowl at Aintree. The brilliant Hurricane Fly won the Stan James Champion

Hurdle in 2011 and 2013 and Mullins' Cheltenham Festival winners include the amazing Quevega who created history by becoming the only horse to win the same race in six consecutive years (the OLBG Mares' Hurdle). Mullins has over 230 horses at his Closutton yard near Bagenalstown in Co Carlow, with many of his current stable superstars such as Faugheen, Annie Power, Douvan and Vautour owned by Rich and Susannah Ricci. His first Grand National runner as a trainer, Micko's Dream, fell at the first in 2000. Mullins, a former chairman of the Irish Trainers' Federation, also suffered disappointment in 2004 when Hedgehunter departed at the final fence in the Crabbie's Grand National when looking assured of a place. He overcame bad luck the following year when Hedgehunter came home 14 lengths clear of Royal Auclair and finished second in 2006. Mullins is set to have more runners than usual during the Crabbie's Grand National Festival as he goes for his first British Jump trainers' championship. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2000 Micko's Dream (FELL 1st); 2002 Alexander Banquet (UR 6th); 2004 Alexander Banquet (FELL 18th), Hedgehunter (FELL 30th); 2005 HEDGEHUNTER (WON); 2006 Hedgehunter (2nd); 2007 Hedgehunter (9th), Homer Wells (PU 22nd), Bothar Na (PU 29th), Livingstonebramble (UR 6th); 2008 Snowy Morning (3rd), Hedgehunter (13th); 2009 Snowy Morning (9th), Irish Invader (11th); 2010 Snowy Morning (6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th); 2011 The Midnight Club (6th), Dooney's Gate (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 The Midnight Club (11th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th), On His Own (FELL 22nd); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Quel Esprit (PU 24th), On His Own (FELL 25th); 2014 Vesper Bell (13th), Prince De Beauchene (16th); 2015 Ballycasey (HMP & UR 8th)**

### **Ms Katie Walsh**

**Born:** County Kildare, Ireland, December 18, 1984. **Background:** Amateur rider from a family steeped in racing. Her father is the trainer, broadcaster and former champion amateur jockey Ted Walsh while her brother is Ruby Walsh, who has twice ridden the Crabbie's Grand National winner and is the most successful jockey ever at the Cheltenham Festival. Katie led up the 2000 Aintree winner Papillon, who was trained by her father and ridden by Ruby. Along with her sister-in-law, Nina Carberry (who is married to her brother Ted Jnr), she is one of the best ever female jockeys. She finished third on Seabass in the 2012 Crabbie's Grand National, the best position achieved by a female rider in the race. In April 2015, she took the Irish Grand National aboard the Sandra Hughes-trained Thunder And Roses. Her sister Jennifer acts as agent for her and Ruby. She is married to trainer Ross O'Sullivan and sells two-year-old breeze-up horses, the best of whom has been Mill Reef and Gimcrack Stakes winner Caspar Netscher. **First winner:** Hannon, trained by her father, in a Flat race at Gowran Park on October 10, 2003. She is an ambassador for Aintree Racecourse. **Cheltenham Festival wins:** 2010 National Hunt Chase (Poker De Sivola), 2010 Vincent O'Brien County Handicap Hurdle (Thousand Stars). **Aintree Festival wins include:** Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle (2010 Thousand Stars).

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2012 Seabass (3rd), 2013 Seabass (13th); 2014 Vesper Bell (13th)**

## Ballynagour (IRE) 10-11-02

**Breeding:** b g Shantou – Simply Deep (Simply Great)

**Breeder:** Graham T Morrow

**Born:** May 3, 2006

**Owner:** Allan Stennett

**Trainer:** David Pipe

**Jockey:** Tom Scudamore

**Form:** 27/412661/9P18/P13/2P2-F1535PP7

\*Was bred in Co Down, Northern Ireland, at the Morrow family's Loughview Stud. Is the best performer by his sire Shantou and is from the close family of high-class hurdler Mighty Mogul. He was sold for €17,000 as a foal at Tattersalls Ireland November Sale.

\*Has yet to sample the Grand National fences, but his six victories include one over the imposing obstacles at Auteuil. He has high-class placed form over the Mildmay Course at Aintree, including a head second to Silviniaco Conti in the Betfred Bowl a year ago.

\*Is versatile about distance – as well as the three mile, one furlong Betfred Bowl, his other Grade One placings include third to Boston Bob in the Melling Chase (two and a half miles) at Aintree and second to Sizing Europe in the Champion Chase (two miles) at Punchestown.

\*Has not shown his very best form this season in conditions generally softer than ideal, but produced an encouraging performance at last month's Cheltenham Festival when staying on into seventh in the Grade Three two-mile, five-furlong handicap chase. Drying ground would be in his favour.

**Race record: Starts 26; Wins 5; 2nd 4; 3rd 2. Win & Place Prize Money: £316,732.**

### Allan Stennett

Allan Stennett, 69, is based in Shifnal, Shropshire, and is now retired, having worked in the fasteners (nuts and bolts) industry for many years. As a racehorse owner, he has been involved with the 2002 Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle winner Galileo and also the 1997 Pertemps Final victor Pharanear. Along with Peter Deal and John Dale, he also had a share in Blowing Wind, winner of what is now the Brown Advisory & Merriebelle Stable Plate in 2002 and third twice in the Grand National (2001 & 2002). Salut Flo carried Stennett's own colours to victory in the 2012 Brown Advisory & Merriebelle Stable Plate while he also won the same race again in 2014 with Ballynagour.

**Crabbie's Grand National record (owned in partnership with Peter Deal and John Dale): 2000 Royal Predica (Fell 1st), 2001 Blowing Wind (3rd); 2002 Blowing Wind (3rd); Royal Predica (8th); 2003 Blowing Wind (8th), Royal Predica (13th)**

### David Pipe (Nicholashayne, Somerset)

**Born:** February 7, 1973 **Background:** Son of 15-time champion Jump trainer Martin Pipe, who in 2001 had 10 runners in the Crabbie's Grand National. He started riding in point-to-points in 1992, going on to gain 22 wins over the next five seasons, plus two under Rules, which included victory aboard Bonanza Boy in the Ludlow Gold Cup. After finishing as a rider, he had spells with Michael Dickinson in the US, Criquette Head-Maarek in France and Joey Ramsden in South Africa, before setting up as a point-to-point trainer, handling Horus, Lord Atterbury and Celestial Gold. Based at Purchas Farm, a mile away from his father's Pond House, he sent out 164 point-to-point winners over six seasons, including Well Armed, successful 15 times. He picked up the reins at Nicholashayne after his father retired in 2006 and promptly won with the first runner under his own name, Standin Obligation, at Kelso on May 9, 2006 and less than two years later emulated his father's 1994 Grand National victory with Miinehoma when he saddled Comply Or Die to take the great Aintree race. Comply Or Die finished second in the following year's Grand National. His 10 Grade One victories include Un Temps Pour Tout (2015 French Champion Hurdle), Dynaste (2014 Ryanair Chase) and Moon Racer (2015 Champion Bumper), while he has accumulated 14 Cheltenham Festival successes including one this year. His best British season came in 2006/7 with 134 winners, while he enjoyed 116 successes in 2014/15. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Puntal (8th), Celtic Son (PU 22nd); 2008 COMPLY OR DIE (WON), Milan Deux Mille (15th), Madison Du Berlais (FELL 8th), Vodka Bleu (PU 19th), Joaaci (FELL 20th); 2009 Comply Or Die (2nd), Arteea (10th); 2010 Comply Or Die (12th), Piraya (13th), Pablo Du Charmil (Fell 2nd), Madison Du Berlais (FELL 19th), The Package (UR 19th); 2011 Piraya (19th), Or Noir De Somoza (FELL 6th), Comply Or Die (PU 29th); 2012 Swing Bill (10th), Junior (FELL 2nd); 2013 Swing Bill (6th); 2014 Swing Bill (9th), The Package (12th), Our Father (UR 8th); 2015 Soll (9th)**

### Tom Scudamore

**Born** May 22, 1982 **Background:** Tom Scudamore was appointed stable jockey to David Pipe in the 2006/2007 season, marking a return to Pond House in Somerset where he began his career as an amateur for Pipe's father Martin, and where his own father Peter Scudamore, was also stable jockey. Tom comes from an illustrious line of jockeys. His great-grandfather Geoffrey rode winners as an amateur, grandfather Michael was Oxo's pilot when winning the 1959 Grand National and his father was eight-time champion jockey with 1,677 successes but never won the Crabbie's Grand National, achieving his best finishing position on third-placed Corbiere in 1985. Tom has made a big impression since leaving Cheltenham College after A-levels in 2000. He won the amateur riders' title in the 2000/01 season and also landed the 2001 Flat amateurs' championship. After 52 unpaid successes, he turned professional in October, 2001, and alongside the backing of Martin Pipe (to whom he was a conditional jockey) he was supported by Nigel Twiston-Davies, to whom his father was formerly assistant. Big victories have come aboard Madison Du Berlais in the Hennessy Gold Cup and the Betfred Bowl at Aintree, while he has enjoyed Grade One success on the tough staying hurdler Lough Derg. At the Cheltenham Festival, he has ridden a total of nine winners, including a double this year aboard Thistlecrack for Colin Tizzard in the Grade One Ryanair World Hurdle and the David Pipe-trained Un Temps Pour Tout in the Ultima Handicap Chase. Thistlecrack has also given him Grade One triumphs in the Doom Bar Sefton Novices' Hurdle at Aintree and the JLT Long Walk Hurdle at Ascot. Scudamore lives with his wife Charlotte and two daughters near Tiverton in Devon. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2001 Northern Starlight (UR 6th); 2002 Smarty (PU 9th); 2003 Blowing Wind (8th); 2004 Shardam (UR 3rd); 2005 Iznogoud (12th); 2006 Iznogoud (PU 27th); 2007 Puntal (8th); 2008 Madison Du Berlais (FELL 8th), 2009 Battlecry (16th), 2010 Madison Du Berlais (FELL19th); 2012 Junior (FELL 2nd); 2013 Major Malarkey (11th); 2014 The Package (12th); 2015 Soll (9th)**

## Black Thunder (FR) 9-10-6

**Breeding:** bl g Malinas – Blackmika (Subotica)

**Breeder:** Mickael Keane

**Born:** May 15, 2007

**Owner:** Valda Burke, Clemmie Shipp, Robert Waley-Cohen

**Trainer:** Paul Nicholls

**Jockey:** Mr Sam Waley-Cohen

**Form:** 4/1211/325F5/01112F/42157-0U6

\*Has been through sales rings four times, most recently when he changed hands for £90,000 at the Goffs UK pre-Grand National auction after racing on the first day of the 2016 Crabbie's Grand National Festival. Previously he had joined Paul Nicholls at a cost of £30,000 as an unraced three-year-old.

\*Bred in Normandy and is from the same family as his stable's smart Tataniano, winner of a Grade 1 novices' chase at Aintree. He is the best by his sire Malinas, who now stands in Ireland.

\*His four wins over fences include a hat-trick as a novice during the 2013/14 season. His latest victory was at Sandown in December 2014, after which he was not disgraced when outclassed by Many Clouds, Smad Place, Dynaste and The Giant Bolster at Cheltenham.

\*Has raced only three times this season, most recently when behind Le Reve in another three-miler at Sandown.

\*Is a rare horse to be registered as black and bids to join Regal (1876), Playfair (1888) and Royal Mail (1937) as National winners of that colour.

**Race record: Starts 24; Wins 7; 2nd 4; 3rd 1. Win & Place Prize Money: £103,476**

### Robert Waley-Cohen (Upton, Oxfordshire)

**Born:** November 10, 1948. **Background:** His father Sir Bernard was Lord Mayor of London (1960-1961). Robert Waley-Cohen, educated at Eton, started out in business with fine art auctioneers Christies (1969-1981) and was sent to America where he later started Alliance Imaging Inc (1983-1988). He founded European-wide healthcare giant Alliance Medical where he was chief executive from 1989 to 2006 and deputy chairman from 2006 to 2010 before the business was sold for £600 million, and has been the chairman of Cheltenham Racecourse since 2011 after becoming a director there in 1986. He is based at the 2,000-acre Upton Estate on the Oxfordshire/Warwickshire border. **Racing interests:** He rode for a spell as an amateur rider, mainly in point-to-points. He enjoyed one success under Rules and finished third in the 1981 Fox Hunter's Chase at Aintree. His greatest day as an owner came in March, 2011, when his amateur rider son Sam Waley-Cohen partnered Long Run to win the Cheltenham Gold Cup, trained by long-time friend Nicky Henderson. The gelding, at six became the youngest Gold Cup winner since Mill House in 1963. The owner's four other successes at the Cheltenham Festival include Rustle's victory in what is now the Ladbrokes World Hurdle in 1989. He has horses in training with Guillaume Macaire in France as well as Nicky Henderson. He also trains a few horses himself under permit and sent out Katarino to win the Crabbie's Fox Hunters' Chase at Aintree in 2005 and 2006, again ridden by Sam. A member of the Jockey Club since 1983, where he has been a steward (1995-2000), he keeps a team of around 10 broodmares at Upton Viva Stud. His son Tom died of cancer in July, 2004, and Tom's Ward at Oxford Children's Hospital is named in memory. He is married to Felicity and they also have another son, Marcus, and a daughter Jessica. Also having a share in Black Thunder are **Clemmie Shipp**, a Weybridge-based event rider and **Valda Bruke**, wife of **Dominic Burke**, Group Chief Executive of JLT and Chairman of Newbury Racercourse.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2003 Katarino (UR 15th); 2007 Liberthine (5th); 2011 Oscar Time (2nd); 2013 Oscar Time (4th); 2014 Long Run (Fell 9th); 2015 Oscar Time (15th)**

### Paul Nicholls (Manor Farm Stables, Ditcheat, Shepton Mallet, Somerset)

**Born:** April 17, 1962 at Lydney, Gloucestershire **Background:** The son of a policeman, he grew up in Olveston. Started out in point-to-points after leaving school at 16 and worked for a couple of yards before becoming a conditional jockey with Josh Gifford for two years and then joining Devon trainer David Barons. He partnered 119 winners between 1980 and 1989, with his biggest British successes coming in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury on Broadheath (1986) and Playschool (1987). He struggled to keep his weight down and gave up race riding. Between 1989 and 1991, he was assistant trainer to Barons, who trained Broadheath and Playschool and sent out Seagram to win the 1991 Grand National. Has been training at Manor Farm Stables in Ditcheat, Somerset, since taking out a licence on November 1, 1991. Started out with eight horses. The facilities have kept on being improved. His daughter Megan is an apprentice jockey with trainer Richard Hannon. **Achievements:** Nine-time champion Jump trainer (2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2013/14, 2014/15) and became the first handler to accrue more than £4 million in a season in 2007/08. He gained his 2,000th winner at

Down Royal on November 5, 2011, less than 20 years after taking his licence, making him the fastest Jump trainer to reach the landmark figure. Has sent out 40 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and is the jointly-third most successful trainer there. His successes include victories in the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (1999 Call Equiname, 2004 Azertyuiop, 2008 & 2009 Master Minded, 2015 Dodging Bullets), Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup (1999 See More Business, 2007 & 2009 Kauto Star, 2008 Denman) and the Ryanair World Hurdle (Big Buck's 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012). He also won the Stan James Champion Hurdle with Rock On Ruby in 2012. At Aintree, he captured the Crabbie's Grand National with Neptune Collonges in 2012 and sent out Big Buck's for four consecutive victories (2009 to 2012) in the race which is now the Grade One Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle. He saddled Silviniaco Conti to win the Grade One Betfred Bowl in 2014 and 2015. He has been leading trainer at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival three times - in 2008, 2011 & 2015.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1992 Just So (6th); 1996 Vicompt De Valmont (10th), Deep Bramble (PU 29th), Brackenfield (UR 19th); 1997 Straight Talk (Fell 14th); 1998 What A Hand (Fell 1st), Court Melody (Fell 6th), General Crack (PU 11th); 1999 Strong Chairman (15th), Double Thriller (Fell 1st), 2000 Earthmover (Fell 4th), Torduff Express (Fell 13th), Flaked Oats (Fell 20th), Escartefigue (UR 30th); 2001 Earthmover (Fell 4th); 2002 Murt's Man (PU 17th), Ad Hoc (BD 27th); 2003 Montifault (5th), Fadalko (UR 6th), Ad Hoc (UR 19th), Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd), Torduff Express (UR 27th); 2004 Exit To Wave (PU 9th); 2005 Royal Auclair (2nd), Heros Collonges (8th), L'Aventure (15th), Ad Hoc (Fell 22nd); 2006 Royal Auclair (Fell 1st), Le Duc (UR 8th), Silver Birch (Fell 15th), Heros Collonges (UR 15th), Le Roi Miguel (PU 19th), Cornish Rebel (PU 19th); 2007 Le Duc (UR 6th), Royal Auclair (Fell 9th), Eurotrek (PU bef 22nd), Thisthatandtother (PU 30th); 2008 Cornish Sett (12th), Turko (Fell 25th), Mr Pointment (PU 30th); 2009 My Will (3rd), Big Fella Thanks (6th), Cornish Sett (17th), Eurotrek (PU 17th); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th), Tricky Trickster (9th), My Will (Fell 4th), Nozic (UR 20th); 2011 Niche Market (5th), Ornaïs (Fell 4th), The Tother One (Fell 6th), What A Friend (PU 27th); 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2013 Join Together (12th), What A Friend (PU 19th), Harry The Viking (PU 26th); 2014 Rocky Creek (5th), Hawkes Point (18th), Tidal Bay (UR 8th); 2015 Mon Parrain (11th), Rocky Creek (17th), Rebel Rebellion (PU 26th), Unioniste (FELL 5th)**

#### **Mr Sam Waley-Cohen**

**Born:** April 15, 1982. **Background:** He started his riding career in point-to-points and is now the country's highest-profile amateur. His first success under Rules came on Moscow Dancer in an amateur riders' hurdle at Kelso on December 1, 2003 and in March 2011 he reached the sport's pinnacle as a rare amateur rider to partner a Cheltenham Gold Cup winner. His victory on Long Run made him the first amateur to take the Festival highlight since Jim Wilson in 1981. His record over the unique spruce fences at Aintree is the envy of most professional riders, with six wins over the Grand National fences courtesy of Katarino (2005 & 2006), Warne (2014) and Rajdhani Express (2015) in the Crabbie's Fox Hunters' Chase, Liberthine in the 2006 Crabbie's Topham Chase and Oscar Time in the 2014 Betfred Becher Chase. He has finished placed in the Crabbie's Grand National twice on Oscar Time – second in 2011 and fourth in 2013. He has also partnered four winners at the Cheltenham Festival, most recently on Rajdhani Express in 2013. Waley-Cohen studied politics at Edinburgh University and started out in business as a commodity trader. He founded his own company, Portman Healthcare, in 2009. It now has 37 dental practices. He is a close friend of Prince William and Kate Middleton (who was at school with Sam's brother Tom, lost to bone cancer in 2004 at the age of 20) and is widely credited with reuniting the pair following their brief break-up in 2007. He married Annabel Ballin in June, 2011 and they have a son, Max. He holds a pilot's licence for planes and helicopters. Sam's father is Robert Waley-Cohen, chairman of Cheltenham Racecourse and owner of Long Run, Oscar Time and many of his son's other mounts.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Liberthine (5th); 2009 Ollie Magern (FELL 2nd); 2011 Oscar Time (2nd); 2013 Oscar Time (4th); 2014 Long Run (Fell 9th); 2015 Oscar Time (15th)**

## Boston Bob (IRE) 11-10-10

**Breeding:** b g Bob Back – Bavaway (Le Bavard)

**Breeder:** Burgage Stud

**Born:** May 2, 2005

**Owner:** Andrea & Graham Wylie

**Trainer:** Willie Mullins

**Jockey:** Paul Townend

**Form:** 31/1112/11FF/1661/132440-50P1

\*Bred at Victor Connolly's Burgage Stud in Co Carlow, and sold as a foal for €20,000. He was traded back for £150,000 at Doncaster Sales as a six-year-old, with a point-to-point victory and a bumper third under his girth. Three weeks later won his first race in the Andrea & Graham Wylie colours.

\*One of the best chasers by his top-class sire Bob Back, from the family of high-class performers Golden Freeze (17th and last in the 1991 Grand National), Sparky Gayle and Danny Harrold.

\*Ran only once for Howard Johnson and transferred to Willie Mullins before the start of the 2010/11 and won five of his next six races.

\*Very classy at his best, with four Grade One victories to his credit, as a novice over hurdles and fences, and as a senior in the Melling Chase at Aintree two years ago and the Punchestown Gold Cup three weeks later.

\*Got back on the winning trail on his most recent run, when he edged out stablemate and fellow National entry On His Own in the Bobbyjo Chase, one of Ireland's recognised Aintree trials, at Fairyhouse in February.

**Race record: Starts 24; Wins 10; 2nd 2; 3rd 2. Win& Place Prize Money: £421,414.**

### Andrea & Graham Wylie

**Background:** Multi-millionaire Graham Wylie made his money in the computer software industry. He is the son of Scottish parents - his father was a coalminer from Stirling and his mother a seamstress from Hawick, where Wylie was born in 1959. After graduating from Newcastle University in 1980 with a degree in computer science and statistics, founded Sage in 1981 with David Goldman, Phil Lever and Paul Muller, selling accountancy software. The company floated on the stock exchange in 1989. After stepping down as managing director of Sage in May, 2003, Wylie sold a number of his shares and gained over £120 million. A huge Newcastle United fan, he married his second wife Andrea Stone at Slaley Hall, Northumberland in May, 2003 - the event was described as the "north-east's wedding of the decade," and was attended by over 250 guests, including Alan Shearer and Sir Bobby Robson. Pop superstar Ronan Keating performed at the couple's wedding (for a reputed £175,000), singing When You Say Nothing At All, from the 1999 film Notting Hill, which the couple saw on their first date. Graham Wylie founded a new company, Technology Services Group (TSG), in 2003. He owns Close House Country Club and golf course, and Gosforth Shopping Centre, and was awarded a CBE for his services to industry in the 2004 New Year's Honours list. Graham's contribution to the North East region has been acknowledged by the award of honorary doctorates by both the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and Northumbrian University, and the freedom of the city of Newcastle. The Sunday Times Rich List in 2015 estimated he is worth £185 million. The Wylies live close to Hexham in Northumberland and Andrea has also excelled at showing dogs ([www.transcendshowdogs.com](http://www.transcendshowdogs.com)), another interest they share, winning the best of breed prize at Crufts 2013 with her Maltese dog Hi-Lite Come Dance With Me. The couple's twin daughters Kiera and Zahra were born in December, 2009. Kiera was born with a defective heart, which has led the Wylies to fund raise for the heart unit at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital among other charitable endeavours.

**Racing Interests:** Their first horse Lord Transcend, named after Andrea's hair and beauty salon in Hexham, won at 33/1 on his debut at Newcastle in March, 2002, and went on to prove himself a high-class horse over hurdles and fences, winning six times in all, before a leg injury sustained at Haydock in January, 2006, cut short his racing career. Having caught the 'racing bug' through the success of Lord Transcend, Graham and Andrea Wylie invested millions of pounds and built up a large string in training with Howard Johnson. At Doncaster's 2003 May Sale, Graham Wylie set a then record for a Jump horse when paying 340,000 guineas for Royal Rosa, which was a wedding present for his wife. Howard Johnson was banned from racing for four years in August 2011, and as a result, the Wylies reduced their 60-strong string by half and sent 12 to British Jump champion Paul Nicholls and seven to Irish Jump champion Willie Mullins. Has seen his colours carried to victory at the Cheltenham Festival on 11 occasions, including three in 2016 (Yorkhill, Black Hercules and Solar Impulse). Their star has been three-time World Hurdle victor Inglis Drever. The Wylies bred the Listed bumper winner Augusta Kate at their Chesters Stud.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Bewleys Berry (Fell 22nd); 2008 Bewleys Berry (5th), Backbeat (Fell 2nd); 2010 Royal Rosa (UR 14th); 2011 Tidal Bay (UR 10th); 2012 On His Own (leased for the day) (Fell 22nd); 2013 On His Own (Fell 25th); 2014 Prince De Beauchene (16th)**

### **Willie Mullins IRE (Bagenalstown, County Carlow)**

**Born** September 15, 1956 **Background:** A six-time champion amateur rider in Ireland, his successes in the saddle included the 1983 Fox Hunters' Chase at Aintree on Atha Cliath (among the also-rans were Robert Waley-Cohen, chairman of Cheltenham Racecourse, and former Aintree Racecourse chairman Lord Daresbury). As a jockey in the Crabbie's Grand National, his rides included The Ladys Master, who ran out in 1983, and Hazy Dawn, who fell at the sixth the following year. He hails from one of Ireland's most famous racing families, being a son of the late Paddy Mullins, the outstanding all-round trainer whose most dazzling star was Dawn Run, winner of the 1984 Champion Hurdle and 1986 Cheltenham Gold Cup. **Training Achievements:** Mullins, who took out a training licence in 1988, has been Ireland's champion trainer 10 times, and will win an 11th title this season (and ninth in a row). He has won most of the major prizes in Britain and Ireland, and several in France as well. He has 48 Cheltenham Festival successes to his credit, including Champion Hurdles with Annie Power, Faugheen, Hurricane Fly, and an extraordinary eight in the Champion Bumper, starting with Wither Or Which (which he also rode) in 1996. He has been leading trainer at The Festival for five of the last six years (seven winners this year and a record eight in 2015) and lies second on the all-time list of most successful trainers behind Nicky Henderson. Mullins' star performer in the early part of the century was Florida Pearl, who was placed in two Cheltenham Gold Cups, won the 1998 RSA Chase, the 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2004 Irish Gold Cups in Ireland as well as the 2001 King George VI Chase and the 2002 Betfred Bowl at Aintree. The brilliant Hurricane Fly won the Stan James Champion Hurdle in 2011 and 2013 and Mullins' Cheltenham Festival winners include the amazing Quevega who created history by becoming the only horse to win the same race in six consecutive years (the OLBG Mares' Hurdle). Mullins has over 230 horses at his Closutton yard near Bagenalstown in Co Carlow, with many of his current stable superstars such as Faugheen, Annie Power, Douvan and Vautour owned by Rich and Susannah Ricci. His first Grand National runner as a trainer, Micko's Dream, fell at the first in 2000. Mullins, a former chairman of the Irish Trainers' Federation, also suffered disappointment in 2004 when Hedgehunter departed at the final fence in the Crabbie's Grand National when looking assured of a place. He overcame bad luck the following year when Hedgehunter came home 14 lengths clear of Royal Auclair and finished second in 2006. Mullins is set to have more runners than usual during the Crabbie's Grand National Festival as he goes for his first British Jump trainers' championship. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2000 Micko's Dream (FELL 1st); 2002 Alexander Banquet (UR 6th); 2004 Alexander Banquet (FELL 18th), Hedgehunter (FELL 30th); 2005 HEDGEHUNTER (WON); 2006 Hedgehunter (2nd); 2007 Hedgehunter (9th), Homer Wells (PU 22nd), Bothar Na (PU 29th), Livingstonebramble (UR 6th); 2008 Snowy Morning (3rd), Hedgehunter (13th); 2009 Snowy Morning (9th), Irish Invader (11th); 2010 Snowy Morning (6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th); 2011 The Midnight Club (6th), Dooney's Gate (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 The Midnight Club (11th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th), On His Own (FELL 22nd); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Quel Esprit (PU 24th), On His Own (FELL 25th); 2014 Vesper Bell (13th), Prince De Beauchene (16th); 2015 Ballycasey (HMP & UR 8th)**

### **Paul Townend**

**Born:** September 15, 1990 **Background:** Grew up surrounded by horses in Co Cork and spent his youth riding on the pony racing circuit. He was also involved in show jumping, but had his heart set on a career as a jockey and joined the powerful Willie Mullins stable as a Flat apprentice after leaving school. He made his debut in a maiden at Ballinrobe on May 2, 2007, coming third on Temlett, and enjoyed his first success the following month, partnering the Seamus O'Donnell-trained The Chip Chopman to victory in an apprentice handicap at Limerick on June 22. He finished 2007 with a winner on the final card of the year at Dundalk, giving him 10 victories for the year, and continued to ride successfully on the level for the first half of 2008, before growing concerns over weight problems prompted a switch to jump racing. He enjoyed almost instant success courtesy of the John Kiely-trained Indian Pace, as the pair landed the Galway Hurdle at the end of July, but Townend endured a barren three-month period immediately afterwards. His fortunes changed after Willie Mullins' number one jockey, Ruby Walsh, sustained a serious injury at Cheltenham in November, 2008, giving Townend a host of plum rides, including successes on Hurricane Fly in the Bar One Racing Royal Bond Novice Hurdle at Fairyhouse and Mikael D'Haguenet in the Barry & Sandra Kelly Memorial Novice Hurdle at Navan in mid-December. He was reunited with Hurricane Fly for further Grade One glory in the paddypower.com Future Champion Novice Hurdle at Leopardstown's Christmas meeting. In 2010/11 he went from strength to strength and was crowned champion jockey in Ireland with 80 wins. Townend has also enjoyed Grade One success on Boston Bob, Arvika Ligeonniere and Champagne Fever. He rode two winners at last year's Cheltenham Festival, Irish Cavalier and Wicklow Brave. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2009 Irish Invader (11th), 2010 Arbor Supreme (UR 15th); 2012 On His Own (FELL 22nd); 2013 Quel Esprit (PU 24th); 2014 Prince De Beauchene (16th); 2015 Bob Ford (PU 29th)**

# Buywise (IRE) 9-10-10

**Breeding:** b g Tikkanen – Greenogue Princess (Rainbows For Life)

**Breeder:** Mrs A Stack

**Born:** May 19, 2007

**Owner:** T Hywel Jones

**Trainer:** Evan Williams

**Jockey:** Paul Moloney

**Form:** F/5811151/15145-3243

\*His granddam Trendy Princess is a half-sister to 1979 Grand National runner-up Zongalero and to the dam of the 1991 runner-up Garrison Savannah. His dam shares her name with Arkle's maternal grandam.

\*Has been through auction rings four times, firstly when sold for €5,000 as a foal at the Tattersalls Ireland November Sale in 2007 and most recently when bought at Doncaster by his current connections for £21,000 as a six-year-old, a month after falling on his debut run under Rules. He has not fallen or unseated since.

\*Has won four times over fences, starting with a hat-trick in 2014. His most recent victory was over hurdles at Ffos Las in February last year.

\*Has yet to run over the Grand National fences, but opened this season at Aintree with a third in the Grade Two Old Roan Chase on the Mildmay course. Produced another classy effort when a half-length second in the Paddy Power Chase at Cheltenham in November.

\*Put his hat in the Grand National ring when a staying-on third at Doncaster in January on his most recent run, his first start over as far as three miles since his novice season.

**Race record: Starts 17; Wins 6; 2nd 1; 3rd 2. Win & Place Prize Money: £124,907**

## Hywel Jones

Hywel Jones (born May, 1958) is a pharmacist from Dinas Powys, Wales. Jones is a director of T H & L Jones pharmacies and as a racehorse owner made history when his horse Plunkett, trained by Evan Williams, won the first ever race staged at Ffos Las on June 18, 2009. He has had horses for 14 seasons with his best being Buywise and the multiple winner On Tour.

## No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

## Evan Williams (Llancarfan, Vale of Glamorgan)

**Born:** April 3, 1971 **Background:** Unrelated to the winning jockey of the 1937 Grand National who bears the same name and also hails from the Cowbridge area of South Wales, Evan Williams was raised on his family's farm above the village of Llancarfan in the Vale of Glamorgan. He is the son of the late amateur jockey Rhys Williams. He used to get up at dawn to milk the cows before going to school. He took over the running of the farm full-time when he was 17, concentrating firstly on dairy farming and then beef when the price of milk dropped. He also started training a few point-to-pointers in 1997 but the foot and mouth outbreak of 2001 decimated his herd and restrictions on the movement of livestock wiped out the point-to-point season. Williams sold his cattle at a loss after the outbreak and went to Ireland to buy 18 horses with the proceeds, going on to be champion point-to-point trainer and jockey in 2002. He rode and trained over 200 point-to-point winners. He took out his full training licence the following year and rode his first winner, Cherry Gold, in a hunters' chase at Chepstow on April 22, 2003. Williams enjoyed his first big-race success at the same course in December of that year, when saddling Sunray to win the Finale Juvenile Hurdle at odds of 40/1. The winners continued to flow and Williams shot to national prominence with State Of Play, who followed up success in a handicap chase at Aintree's Grand National meeting in April, 2006, with victory in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury seven months later. The chaser went on to triumph in the Charlie Hall Chase at Wetherby in 2008, while other big-race success has arrived courtesy of High Chimes, who gave Williams a first Cheltenham Festival winner in the 2008 Fulke Walwyn Kim Muir Handicap Chase, and Grade Two scorers Deep Purple and Simarian. In the 2009/10 season, Barizan emerged as a top-class juvenile hurdler, winning a Grade One at Punchestown after finishing second in both the JCB Triumph Hurdle and in the Anniversary 4-Y-O Hurdle at Aintree. Williams enjoyed his best season in terms of winners in 2010/11, with 90 successes and had 89 victories in Britain and Ireland in 2011/12. State Of Play did him proud in the Grand National - finishing fourth in 2009, third in 2010 and fourth the 2011 before unseating his rider in 2012 when Cappa Bleu ran fourth. Cappa Bleu gave him his best placing in the Crabbie's Grand National when runner-up to Auroras Encore in 2013. He is married to Catherine who continued to train point-to-pointers after he took out his professional licence. They have three children William, Isabel and Ellie. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2009 State Of Play (4th); 2010 State Of Play (3rd); 2011 State Of Play (4th); 2012 Cappa Bleu (4th); State Of Play (UR 5th); Deep Purple (PU 19th); 2013 Cappa Bleu (2nd); 2014 One In A Milan (Fell 22nd)**

## Paul Moloney

**Born:** October 17, 1978, hailing from New Inn, close to Ballydoyle in Co Tipperary, Ireland **Background:** Paul Moloney used to share a house in Newmarket with former champion Flat jockey Jamie Spencer and was heavily involved in both hunting and show jumping. He rode his first point-to-point winner at Quin in 1996 for trainer Danny O'Connell. He spent school holidays with Jim Bolger, working alongside Tony McCoy and leading Flat rider Ted Durcan, and later joined Michael Hourigan, for whom he rode his first three winners. His initial success under Rules came on Vain Princess at Clonmel in June, 1995. Moloney was one of Ireland's leading amateurs and shared the 1998/99 title with Philip Fenton. Moloney also spent time with Christy Roche while in Ireland. He came to Britain for tuition from Yogi Breisner before turning professional and relocated to Newmarket during the 2002/2003 season when he rode mainly for Ian Williams. He enjoyed big-race success at Aintree in 2006 when he rode State Of Play to victory in a handicap chase on the Mildmay Course and teamed up with the same horse to secure the biggest win of his career so far in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup Handicap Chase at Newbury in November, 2006. Remarkably, Moloney has placed in the last seven renewals of the Crabbie's Grand National, all on horses owned by William & Angela Rucker. He rides mainly for Evan Williams and his biggest wins include Deep Purple's victory in the 2009 Charlie Hall Chase at Wetherby. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2002 Iris Bleu (FELL 5th); 2004 Royal Atalza (PU 29th); 2007 Graphic Approach (FELL 22nd); 2008 Vodka Bleu (PU 19th); 2009 State Of Play (4th); 2010 State Of Play (3rd); 2011 State Of Play (4th); 2012 Cappa Bleu (4th), 2013 Cappa Bleu (2nd); 2014 Alvarado (4th); 2015 Alvarado (4th)**

# Double Ross (IRE) 10-10-09

**Breeding:** ch g Double Eclipse – Kinross (Nearly A Hand)  
**Breeder:** Tom McIlhagga  
**Born:** April 1, 2006  
**Owner:** Options O Syndicate  
**Trainer:** Nigel Twiston-Davies  
**Jockey:** Ryan Hatch  
**Form:** 3/35132082/32F14453P/613211235/B3UR60-24599

\*Bred in Northern Ireland by Co Antrim-based Tom McIlhagga, in whose family colours he had his first run - a third in a Cork bumper five years ago - before transferring to his present ownership.

\*Is the best chaser by Double Eclipse and is a full brother to Mr Moonshine, who jumped round in 15<sup>th</sup> place in the 2014 Grand National.

\*He has completed in both his runs over the Grand National fences, fifth in the Topham Trophy two years ago and fifth in the Grand Sefton Chase in December last year.

\*One of the most experienced in the field, with 38 outings. Has not won since he took a Grade 3 chase at Cheltenham in January 2014, but ran third to Taquin Du Seuil in the Grade 1 JLT Novices' Chase that season and has been consistent in good handicap company since.

\*Like several of his Grand National rivals, he had his most recent run at the Cheltenham Festival in the Ultima Chase, in which he finished ninth.

**Race record: Starts 38; Wins 5; 2nd 6; 3rd 8. Win & Place Prize Money: £216,061**

## Options O Syndicate

Steve Wignall and John Flannery were successful greyhound owners with Dean Childs before turning their attention to racing. They owned horses on the Flat with William Haggas, including Listed winner Dever Dream, and now also over jumps with Nigel Twiston-Davies. The pair run a civil engineering company, Options Energy Services Ltd. They claimed their first Cheltenham Festival winner in 2016 when the Twiston-Davies-trained Ballyandy took the Weatherbys Champion Bumper.

## No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

## Nigel Twiston-Davies (Guiting Power, Gloucestershire)

Nigel Twiston-Davies initially combined training as a permit-holder with his farming interests throughout the 1980s, having his first winner with Last Of The Foxes at Hereford in March, 1982, before the agricultural recession prompted him to make training his full-time profession. He took out a full training licence in 1989, recording his first win as a public trainer in December of that year with Babil at Newbury. He has since gone on to register more than 1,700 successes. Born on May 16, 1957, Twiston-Davies rode 17 winners as an amateur under Rules and gained a further 17 point-to-point victories, and served as assistant trainer to Richard Head and Fred Rimell. A childhood neighbour and friend of Peter Scudamore, he went into partnership with the former champion jump jockey to set up stables at Grange Hill Farm, Guiting Power, Gloucestershire, although Scudamore is no longer involved in the venture and currently assists Lucinda Russell. Twiston-Davies adopted and developed the pioneering techniques of Martin Pipe, such as interval training and regular blood tests for his string, enabling him to rapidly raise his profile among the training ranks. He is the only current trainer to have won the Crabbie's Grand National more than once, saddling Earth Summit to victory in 1998 and Bindaree four years later. The 2001/2002 campaign had been relatively quiet by Twiston-Davies' high standards before Bindaree provided him with his second Crabbie's Grand National success. Afterwards he revealed that he had been intending to give up training, but despite "having a bigger debt than Argentina" after buying out Scudamore, the Aintree victory made him have a change of heart. Twiston-Davies has had 17 successes at the Cheltenham Festival, headed by Imperial Commander in the 2010 Betfred Cheltenham Gold Cup. He had two winners at the meeting this year. Other big-race successes include the bet365 Gold Cup with Beau, the Hennessy Gold Cup with King's Road, the Scottish Grand National with Captain Dibble (1992), Earth Summit (1994) and Hello Bud (2009), the Welsh Grand National with Earth Summit (1997) and Bindaree (2003), the Betfair Chase with Imperial Commander (2010) and the Doom Bar Aintree Hurdle (2014) with The New One. His best season numerically was in 2010/11, when he saddled 97 winners. His sons Sam and Willy are both jockeys. Sam is stable jockey to Paul Nicholls, but still rides for his father when possible, while Willy, who also started out over Jumps, is now a Flat jockey. **John Smith's Grand National Record: 1994 Young Hustler (BD 11th); 1995 Camelot Knight (Fell 21st), Dakyns Boy (UR 10th), Young Hustler (UR 3rd); 1996 Young Hustler (5th), Captain Dibble (11th); 1997 Camelot Knight (3rd), Dakyns Boy (8th), Grange Brake (Refused 27th); 1998 EARTH SUMMIT (WON); 1999 Earth Summit (8th), Camelot Knight (BD 22nd); 2000 Camelot Knight (15th); 2001 Beau (UR 20th), Spanish Main (Fell 1st); 2002 BINDAREE (WON), Frantic Tan (UR 5th), Beau (UR 14th); 2003 Bindaree (6th); 2004 Shardam (UR 3rd), Bindaree (UR 6th); 2005 Bindaree (11th), 2006 Baron Windrush (UR 3rd); 2007 Knowhere (UR 8th); Naunton Brook (PU bef 23rd), 2008 Fundamentalist (Fell 3rd), Ardaghey (Fell 4th), Naunton Brook (PU 19th), Knowhere (UR 25th); 2009 Battlecry (16th), Ollie Magern (Fell 2nd), Fundamentalist (PU 21st), Knowhere (PU 25th); 2010 Hello Bud (5th), Beat The Boys (PU 19th), Ballyfitz (Fell 22nd), Ollie Magern (PU 28th); 2011 Hello Bud (PU 29th), Grand Slam Hero (Fell 13th); 2012 Hello Bud (7th), Viking Blond (Fell 1st); 2013 Major Malarkey (11th), Viking Blong (PU 15th), Imperial Commander (PU 22nd)**

## Ryan Hatch

**Born:** Gloucestershire, 16 June, 1993 **Background:** Hatch has been involved in horses from a very early age having been a member of his local Pony Club. His interest in racing was fuelled by his father, who rode as a jockey in Scandinavia and then worked for triple Gold Cup winning trainer Henrietta Knight. After finishing his GCSEs he went to the British Racing School in Newmarket. He had worked for Nigel Twiston-Davies' Gloucestershire yard since his school days and returned after finishing his nine-week course, and has been with trainer ever since. His biggest win came at this season's Cheltenham Festival when he landed the Grade One RSA Chase on Blaklion, the same horse he won the Grade Two totepool Towton Novices' Chase at Wetherby earlier in the year. He has his first ride in the Crabbie's Grand National on Double Ross, a horse on whom he finished fifth on in this season's Betfred Grand Sefton Chase.

## No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

# First Lieutenant (IRE) 11-11-04

**Breeding:** ch g Presenting - Fourstargale (IRE) (Fourstars Allstar (USA))

**Breeder:** Mary O'Connor

**Born:** April 15, 2005

**Owner:** Gigginstown House Stud

**Trainer:** Mouse Morris IRE

**Jockey:** Bryan Cooper

**Form:** 1/41311/3121P223/4232213/34234/246830-8432P

\*Has won three times at Grade One level, including his most recent success, in the Betfred Bowl at the 2013 Grand National Festival at Aintree, over three miles and a furlong of the Mildmay course.

\*Was on the back foot from the early stages of last year's Crabbie's Grand National after making mistakes at the first two fences, eventually completing in 16th.

\*Two very good runs over fences at the start of this season, including an excellent third in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury before going down by a half-length to Don Poli in the Grade One Lexus Chase at Leopardstown over Christmas.

\*Pulled up last time out in the Grade One Irish Gold Cup at Leopardstown on February 6.

\*Cost 255,000 euros as a three-year-old at 2008 Tattersalls Ireland Derby Sale.

**Race record: Starts: 37; Wins: 7 2nd: 9 3rd: 9 Win & Place Prize Money: £556,551**

## Gigginstown House Stud

Gigginstown House Stud, covering 1,000 acres at Delvin near Mullingar, Co Westmeath, Ireland is the residence of Michael O'Leary, chief executive of Ryanair, Europe's largest budget airline. O'Leary was born in Mullingar, County Westmeath on March 20, 1961 and educated at Clongowes Wood College in County Kildare before reading business studies at Trinity College Dublin. He was a tax consultant at accountants KPMG in 1984, became financial adviser to Tony Ryan, founder of Ryanair two years later. He became deputy chief executive of Ryanair in 1988 and progressed to chief operating officer of Ryanair in 1991. He has overseen the rapid development of Ryanair since 1994 when he became chief executive and his worth was valued at £598 million in the 2015 Sunday Times Rich List. O'Leary started off with horses on the Flat with David Wachman and Mick Halford, but he has rapidly become a major Jump owner with a string only rivalled by J P McManus. His team of over 170 horses in training is split between a wide range of trainers in Ireland and his racing enthusiasm was kick-started when one of his first horses, War Of Attrition, won the 2006 Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup. His 15 Cheltenham Festival winners include this year's Cheltenham Gold Cup hero Don Cossack. Other Festival winners include Weapon's Amnesty in the 2009 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle and 2010 RSA Chase, First Lieutenant in the 2011 Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle and Sir Des Champs in the 2012 JLT Novices' Chase. O'Leary's brother Eddie, based at nearby Lynn Lodge Stud in Mullingar, oversees the Gigginstown racing operation; the young horses are brought along at Pat Doyle's County Tipperary stables and in point-to-points by Gordon Elliott. Bryan Cooper is retained jockey for Gigginstown. O'Leary is married to former banker Anita (Farrell) and they have four children. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2009 Hear The Echo (FELL 30th); 2012 Tharawaat (8th), 2014 Quito De La Roque (PU 21st); 2015 First Lieutenant (16th)**

## Michael (Mouse) Morris IRE (Fethard, Co Tipperary)

**Born:** April 4, 1951 **Background:** Michael Morris has been known as Mouse since his early days as an amateur rider. His late father, Lord Killanin, once headed the International Olympic Committee, while his brother Redmond's credits as a film producer include The Reader. As a youngster in Ireland, Mouse showed little enthusiasm for school, preferring to spend his mornings riding out for a local trainer and did not enjoy his time when sent to Ampleforth College in Yorkshire. He served his apprenticeship at the celebrated Frenchie Nicholson jockey academy in Cheltenham alongside Pat Eddery and Tony Murray. Back in Ireland, he rode principally for Edward O'Grady, winning the Irish Grand National on Billycan in 1977 and Cheltenham's Queen Mother Champion Chase twice on Skymas in 1976 and 1977. **Training Career:** He took out his trainer's licence in 1980 and immediately established himself as one of Ireland's leading Jump trainers. Morris has seven Cheltenham Festival wins to his credit, the best being Buck House's victory in the 1986 Queen Mother Champion Chase and War Of Attrition's 2006 Cheltenham Gold Cup success. He won his second Irish Grand National on Easter Monday, 2016 with Rogue Angel - his first came with Hear The Echo in 2008. It was an emotional success for Morris following the death of his son Christopher last year. He saddled First Lieutenant, the 2011 Neptune Investment Novices' Hurdle winner at the Cheltenham Festival, to take the 2013 Betfred Bowl at Aintree. Morris trains at Everardsgrange, Fethard, in Co. Tipperary. In 1984, Door Step became his first Crabbie's Grand National runner, but fell at the 18th fence. Lastofthebrownies finished a best-placed fourth for him in 1989.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1984 Door Step (FELL 18th); 1987 Attitude Adjuster (8th), Hi Harry (Ref 19th); 1988 Attitude Adjuster (5th), Lastofthebrownies (FELL 28th); 1989 Lastofthebrownies (4th), Attitude Adjuster (12th), Cranlome (FELL 2nd); 1990 Lastofthebrownies (5th); 1991 Mick's Star (13th); 1992 Rawhide (UR 1st); 1995 For William (15th); 1996 Three Brownies (6th); 1997 New Co (15th); 2004 Alcapone (PU 25th); 2008 Baily Breeze (8th); 2009 Hear The Echo (FELL 30th); 2015 First Lieutenant (16th)**

## Bryan Cooper

**Born:** August 8, 1992) **Background:** The son of County Kerry handler Tom Cooper, he has been around horses all his life. Cooper showjumped as a child, riding at the Royal Dublin Show and began pony racing at the age of 14, when his contemporaries included Paul Townend and Danny Mullins, and rode 55 winners in an 18-month period. After leaving school at the age of 15, he was too light - weighing seven and a half stone - to be a Jump jockey and joined Kevin Prendergast's Flat stable, having his first ride within a week of his 16th birthday. He had his first success on Rossdara, trained by his father in a Clonmel maiden hurdle on October 29, 2009 and had a first Pattern race success in the Grade Three Buck House Novice Chase on Lucky William, also trained by his father, in October, 2011. He subsequently joined the late Dessie Hughes' stable and sprang to prominence at the 2013 Cheltenham Festival when he guided Beneficent to success in the RSA Chase and followed that up with an imperious victory on Our Conor in the JCB Triumph Hurdle. He also rode Ted Veale to victory in the Vincent O'Brien County Handicap Hurdle. He took over from Davy Russell as first jockey to Gigginstown House Stud in January, 2014, and has gone on to enjoy a large number of Pattern race victories for Michael O'Leary's powerful organisation, headed by Don Cossack in the 2016 Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup. He has also enjoyed significant Grade One success on the likes of Don Poli, No More Heroes and Road To Riches. His tally at the Cheltenham Festival now stands at six winners.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2012 Rare Bob (BD 5th); 2013 Rare Bob (5th)**

## Gallant Oscar (IRE) 10-10-8

**Breeding:** b g Oscar – Park Wave (Supreme Leader)

**Breeder:** Patricia & Marie Keating

**Born:** May 9, 2006

**Owner:** JP McManus

**Trainer:** Tony Martin

**Jockey:** Mark Walsh

**Form:** 54//099041F/4111U/12243-1U75

\*Is from a distinguished chasing family, his unraced dam being a half-sister to Risk Of Thunder and to the dam of The Listener, Offshore Account and Fork Lightning.

\*His sire Oscar has been responsible for 2011 runner-up Oscar Time and 2013 third Teaforthree.

\*Bought for €21,000 as an unraced three-year-old by Garrett Kelly and then privately by JP McManus a year ago, after he ran third to The Druids Nephew at Cheltenham.

\*In 2013 banned for 42 days under the non-triers' rule, when he finished a never-nearer fourth at 50/1 on his first run over fences. Next time out he won as he liked, as 3/1 favourite.

\*Missed the cut for the National last year but found compensation at the Punchestown festival in May, with a runaway first victory in his new colours in a Grade B Handicap. Was closing on the leaders when he unseated at Leopardstown in December on his return to action.

\*His latest run brought a staying-on fifth over three miles at Naas last month on heavy going and better ground will be in his favour.

**Race record: Starts 22; Wins 5; 2nd 2; 3rd 1. Win & Place Prize Money: £88,552**

### J P McManus

**Born:** March 10, 1951 in Co Limerick, Ireland. **Background:** John Patrick 'J P' McManus attended the Christian Brothers school on Sexton Street, Limerick. He left his father's plant hire business at the age of 20 to become a racecourse bookmaker, but then took the less well-trodden route of gamekeeper-turned-poacher when becoming a professional punter. McManus recalls one of his first bets as being on Merryman II in the 1960 Grand National when he was just nine, but the bet that changed his life was £4 on Linden Tree in a Newmarket maiden in 1970, the horse winning at 100/8. He had another £4 on when Linden Tree won the Observer Gold Cup at 25/1, and £5 each-way at 33/1 for the Derby, when the horse beat all bar Mill Reef. He was dubbed "the Sundance Kid" by journalist Hugh McIlvanney after landing a number of major gambles during the 1970s. McManus has a host of business interests including dealing on the financial markets from his Geneva, Switzerland, base and part-ownership of the Sandy Lane Hotel in Barbados, where he also has a house. With John Magnier, he bought a 28.7% stake in Manchester United through the Cubic Expression company before subsequently selling out to US tycoon Malcolm Glazer in 2005. He was in the news shortly after that because of his stake in the pub and restaurant operator Mitchells and Butler. In 2015, the Sunday Times estimated McManus' wealth at £586 million, making him the 16th richest person in Ireland. **Racing interests:** McManus purchased his first racehorse, Cill Dara, at the age of 26 and is the biggest jump owner in terms of numbers in Britain and Ireland, with some 400 horses in training. He owns Jackdaws Castle, the Gloucestershire yard that Jonjo O'Neill trains from, and has invested heavily in improving facilities since purchasing the property in 2001. Mister Donovan provided him with his first Cheltenham Festival success in the 1982 Supreme Novices' Hurdle and McManus has enjoyed 48 winners in total at the meeting - far more than any other owner. The mighty Istabraq is the most revered horse he has owned following three consecutive victories in the Champion Hurdle (1998, 1999, 2000), while he has also won a Cheltenham Gold Cup with Synchronised (2012) and three World Hurdles with Baracouda (2002 & 2003) and More Of That (2014). A full 28 years after his first runner in the race, McManus finally achieved a long-held ambition when Don't Push It, trained by Jonjo O'Neill and ridden by A P McCoy, won the 2010 Crabbie's Grand National. He has been British champion owner for the 2005/6, 2006/7, 2008/9, 2009/10, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 & 2014/15 seasons. He retained A P McCoy as his main jockey from April, 2004 until the rider's retirement in April 2015. Barry Geraghty has taken over that position, with McCoy having an advisory role. Frank Berry is the McManus racing manager. **Other interests:** McManus does a lot of work for charity and his Pro-Am golf tournament, which takes place every five years, has raised over 100 million euros. McManus is also a keen backgammon player and a big hurling fan. **Crabbie's Grand National Record:** **1982 Deep Gale (FELL 1st), 1988 Bucko (PU 27th), 1992 Laura's Beau (3rd), 1994 Laura's Beau (FELL 6th), 1996 Wylde Hide (UR 24th), 1997 Wylde Hide (UR 22nd); 1998 Gimme Five (5th), 2002 Spot Thedifference (UR 27th); 2003 Youlneverwalkalone (PU 13th); 2004 Clan Royal (2nd), Spot Thedifference (5th), Risk Accessor (UR 6th), Le Coudray (FELL 22nd); 2005 Innox (7th), Spot Thedifference (18th), Shamawan (21st), Clan Royal (CO 22nd), Le Coudray (PU 21st), Risk Accessor (UR 2nd); 2006 Clan Royal (3rd), Risk Accessor (5th), Innox (FELL 1st), First Gold (UR 23rd); 2007 L'Ami (10th), Clan Royal (11th); 2008 King Johns Castle (2nd), L'Ami (FELL 2nd), Bob Hall (PU 19th), Butler's Cabin (FELL 22nd); 2009 Butler's Cabin (7th), Reveillez (BD 3rd), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), L'Ami (PU 30th); 2010 DON'T PUSH IT (WON), Can't Buy Time (FELL 8th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th), King Johns Castle (refused to race); 2011 Don't Push It (3rd), Blue Sea Cracker (14th), Quolibet (UR 11th), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 Sunnyhillboy (2nd), Synchronised (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 10th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Colbert Station (UR 15th), Lost Glory (PU 17th), Sunnyhillboy (UR last); 2014 Double Seven (3rd), Colbert Station (PU 25th); 2015 Shutthefrontdoor (5th), Cause Of Causes (8th), Wyck Hill (PU 29th)**

### **Tony Martin IRE**

**Born:** March 20, 1962 **Background:** Famed for his raids across the Irish Sea from his Arodstown stables at Moynalvey, County Meath, Tony Martin has made his mark on the Flat as well as over Jumps. Martin started in racing 27 years ago under the old school regime of Clem Magnier, the dual purpose trainer. There followed stints with Michael Cunningham, Ted Curtin, Ted Walsh and Lambourn-based Oliver Sherwood, with whom he spent a year. He also had a spell in America before taking up training point-to-pointers. During his days with Magnier, the nickname 'Harvey' stuck with Martin. That was in the golden era of the showjumper Harvey Smith, and, because there were plenty of big tough horses around, Martin had to be as strong as Harvey Smith to ride them. Martin, an accomplished amateur rider, trained and rode the 1999 novices' hunters' chase winner Extra Stout at Aintree. His big race victories include Davids Lad's success in the 2001 Irish Grand National, while She's Our Mare collected the competitive Powers Gold Label Handicap Hurdle at Fairyhouse in April 1999 and added the valuable Swinton Hurdle at Haydock the following month. Xenophon, winner of the 2003 Pierse Hurdle provided him with his first Cheltenham Festival success in that season's Coral Cup, while Dun Doire added to Martin's Festival tally in the 2006 Ultima Handicap Chase. That was the gelding's sixth consecutive victory in five months, a run of success that saw his rating rise from 79 to 137. Linden's Lotto won both the Glenfarclas Cross Country Chases at Cheltenham in 1999, the year after taking the Glenfarclas Cross Country Chase at the Paddy Power Gold Cup meeting. He won this race again in 2015 with Gigginstown House Stud's Rivage D'Or. Other Festival winners include Ted Veale in the Vincent O'Brien County Hurdle (2013), Beneficient in the JLT Novices' Chase (2013) and Savello in the Johnny Henderson Grand Annual Chase Challenge Cup (2014). He has had six Cheltenham Festival winners to date. His biggest successes on the Flat have come with She's Our Mare (1999) in the Cambridgeshire and Leg Spinner (2007) in the Cesarewitch, the "Autumn Double" at Newmarket and two of the most competitive Flat handicaps in the UK, while he has also recorded an Ascot Stakes double at the Royal Ascot with Barba Papa (2000) and Leg Spinner (2005). **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2000 Hollybank Buck (10th); 2001 Hollybank Buck (Fell 3rd); 2002 Davids Lad (Fell 27th); 2004 Davids Lad (11th), 2007 Dun Doire (PU Bef 27th) 2008 Dun Doire (PU 29th)**

### **Mark Walsh**

**Born** March 23, 1986. **Background:** Mark Walsh grew up surrounded by horses in Clane, County Kildare. Although not related to Ted and Ruby, Mark's cousin David was also a successful jockey who rode Barton Bank to finish second to Mr Mulligan in the 1997 Cheltenham Gold Cup. Walsh began riding ponies and going hunting from an early age and soon progressed to race-riding on the pony circuit. He started to work for Christy Roche when he was 15 but enjoyed his first winner for permit holder Marcus Callaghan (who was also celebrating his maiden victory) when Shrug landed a handicap hurdle at Punchestown on September 29, 2002. His only other success that season was on the Roche-trained Allofasudden, who took a handicap hurdle at the 2003 Punchestown Festival, but he soon started firing in the winners, with 12 successes in 2003/04 and 19 victories the following season. But the winners were harder to come by in the following three seasons as he failed to reach double figures. That changed in the 2008/09 campaign when he hit 19 winners once again and enjoyed big-race success on the Tom Taaffe-trained Glenfinn Captain in the Grade Two Red Mills Chase at Gowran Park, and the Francis Flood-trained P'tit Fute, who won valuable handicap hurdles at Galway and Leopardstown. On his Aintree debut in 2004, Walsh partnered Puck Out to triumph in a handicap hurdle. Walsh has failed to get around the course in five attempts at the Crabbie's Grand National. He has struck up a good relationship with several of J P McManus's horses, such as Aranleigh and Captain Cee Bee and in 2012 won the Galway Plate and Dan Moore Handicap Chase on Fairyhouse on Bob Lingo. He has enjoyed Grade One success on the Paul Nolan-trained Defy Logic in the 2013 Racing Post Novice Chase at Leopardstown, the Jessica Harrington-trained Jezki in Punchestown's Ladbrokes World Series Hurdle in 2015, and most recently aboard Carlingford Lough for John Kiely in the Irish Gold Cup at Punchestown in February 2016. Walsh rode 75 winners in the 2014/15 season – his best to date. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2009 Reveillez (BD 3rd); 2011 Quolibet (UR 11th); 2012 Arbor Supreme (UR 10th); 2013 Lost Glory (PU 17th); 2014 Colbert Station (PU 25th)**

## Gilgamboa (IRE) 8-11-01

**Breeding:** b g Westerner – Hi Native (Be My Native)

**Breeder:** Kieran McManus

**Born:** March 30, 2008

**Owner:** J P McManus

**Trainer:** Enda Bolger IRE

**Jockey:** Robbie Power

**Form:** 13110/11321-3455

\*Is the only home-bred runner in the field, having been bred by owner J P McManus's son Kieran. Is out of an unraced sister to top-class chaser Native Upmanship, and is the best chaser so far by Westerner, one of Ireland's most upwardly mobile sires.

\*The eight-year-old is named after rock legend Bruce Springsteen's assistant Gil Gamboa.

\*Will be one of the least experienced in the line-up, having had only 14 runs, of which nine have been over fences. Has yet to run at Aintree, over either set of fences. Has never fallen or unseated.

\*Has won three chases, most notably when taking the novices' Grade One Ryanair Gold Cup at Fairyhouse in April last year, his most recent success. His warm-up for Aintree came at Cheltenham last month, when he appreciated the drying ground to run a creditable staying-on fifth to the brilliant Vautour in the Ryanair Chase.

**Race record: Starts 14; Wins 6; 2nd 1; 3rd 3. Win & Place Prize Money: £174,074.**

### J P McManus

**Born:** March 10, 1951 in Co Limerick, Ireland. **Background:** John Patrick 'J P' McManus attended the Christian Brothers school on Sexton Street, Limerick. He left his father's plant hire business at the age of 20 to become a racecourse bookmaker, but then took the less well-trodden route of gamekeeper-turned-poacher when becoming a professional punter. McManus recalls one of his first bets as being on Merryman II in the 1960 Grand National when he was just nine, but the bet that changed his life was £4 on Linden Tree in a Newmarket maiden in 1970, the horse winning at 100/8. He had another £4 on when Linden Tree won the Observer Gold Cup at 25/1, and £5 each-way at 33/1 for the Derby, when the horse beat all bar Mill Reef. He was dubbed "the Sundance Kid" by journalist Hugh McIlvanney after landing a number of major gambles during the 1970s. McManus has a host of business interests including dealing on the financial markets from his Geneva, Switzerland, base and part-ownership of the Sandy Lane Hotel in Barbados, where he also has a house. With John Magnier, he bought a 28.7% stake in Manchester United through the Cubic Expression company before subsequently selling out to US tycoon Malcolm Glazer in 2005. He was in the news shortly after that because of his stake in the pub and restaurant operator Mitchells and Butler. In 2015, the Sunday Times estimated McManus' wealth at £586 million, making him the 16th richest person in Ireland. **Racing interests:** McManus purchased his first racehorse, Cill Dara, at the age of 26 and is the biggest jump owner in terms of numbers in Britain and Ireland, with some 400 horses in training. He owns Jackdaws Castle, the Gloucestershire yard that Jonjo O'Neill trains from, and has invested heavily in improving facilities since purchasing the property in 2001. Mister Donovan provided him with his first Cheltenham Festival success in the 1982 Supreme Novices' Hurdle and McManus has enjoyed 48 winners in total at the meeting - far more than any other owner. The mighty Istabraq is the most revered horse he has owned following three consecutive victories in the Champion Hurdle (1998, 1999, 2000), while he has also won a Cheltenham Gold Cup with Synchronised (2012) and three World Hurdles with Baracouda (2002 & 2003) and More Of That (2014). A full 28 years after his first runner in the race, McManus finally achieved a long-held ambition when Don't Push It, trained by Jonjo O'Neill and ridden by A P McCoy, won the 2010 Crabbie's Grand National. He has been British champion owner for the 2005/6, 2006/7, 2008/9, 2009/10, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 & 2014/15 seasons. He retained A P McCoy as his main jockey from April, 2004 until the rider's retirement in April 2015. Barry Geraghty has taken over that position, with McCoy having an advisory role. Frank Berry is the McManus racing manager. **Other interests:** McManus does a lot of work for charity and his Pro-Am golf tournament, which takes place every five years, has raised over 100 million euros. McManus is also a keen backgammon player and a big hurling fan. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1982 Deep Gale (FELL 1st), 1988 Bucko (PU 27th), 1992 Laura's Beau (3rd), 1994 Laura's Beau (FELL 6th), 1996 Wylde Hide (UR 24th), 1997 Wylde Hide (UR 22nd); 1998 Gimme Five (5th), 2002 Spot Thedifference (UR 27th); 2003 Youlneverwalkalone (PU 13th); 2004 Clan Royal (2nd), Spot Thedifference (5th), Risk Accessor (UR 6th), Le Coudray (FELL 22nd); 2005 Innox (7th), Spot Thedifference (18th), Shamawan (21st), Clan Royal (CO 22nd), Le Coudray (PU 21st), Risk Accessor (UR 2nd); 2006 Clan Royal (3rd), Risk Accessor (5th), Innox (FELL 1st), First Gold (UR 23rd); 2007 L'Ami (10th), Clan Royal (11th); 2008 King Johns Castle (2nd), L'Ami (FELL 2nd), Bob Hall (PU 19th), Butler's Cabin (FELL 22nd); 2009 Butler's Cabin (7th), Reveillez (BD 3rd), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), L'Ami (PU 30th); 2010 DON'T PUSH IT (WON),**

**Can't Buy Time (FELL 8th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th), King Johns Castle (refused to race); 2011 Don't Push It (3rd), Blue Sea Cracker (14th), Quolibet (UR 11th), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 Sunnyhillboy (2nd), Synchronised (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 10th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Colbert Station (UR 15th), Lost Glory (PU 17th), Sunnyhillboy (UR last); 2014 Double Seven (3rd), Colbert Station (PU 25th); 2015 Shutthefrontdoor (5th), Cause Of Causes (8th), Wyck Hill (PU 29th)**

### **Enda Bolger IRE**

**Born:** April 21, 1963 **Background:** Enda Bolger began riding as a four-year-old on ponies at his father's Kilkenny farm and became a leading amateur rider in Ireland, partnering many winners for P P Hogan. He started training in 1986 and has become renowned for his brilliant handling of cross country horses.

**Training Career:** Based at Howardstown House in Bruree, Co Limerick, Bolger amazingly landed Ireland's most prestigious cross country race, the La Touche Cup at the Punchestown Festival, on 10 consecutive occasions between 1997 and 2007 with Risk Of Thunder (1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 & 2002), Buailtes And Fadas (2003), Spot Thedifference (2004 and 2007) and Good Step (2004 and 2005). He also won the race with Garde Champetre (2009) and L'Ami (2010). He has also won four renewals of the Glenfarclas Cross Country Chase and has enjoyed seven winners in total at the Cheltenham Festival having won the Cheltenham Foxhunter Chase with Elegant Lord (1996) and On The Fringe (2015 & 2016). Elegant Lord and On The Fringe also went on to win the Crabbie's Fox Hunters' Chase at Aintree. Gilgamboa gave Bolger a first Grade One success in the Ryanair Gold Cup at Fairyhouse in April, 2015. Bolger is a fan of singer Bruce Springsteen and has named Lucky Town, Nebraska and Fiftysevenchannels after Springsteen songs or albums. Gilgamboa is named after Springsteen's assistant, Gil Gamboa.

**Crabbie's National Record: 2000 Lucky Town (8th); 2002 Spot Thedifference (UR 4 out); 2004 Spot Thedifference (5th); 2005 Spot Thedifference (18th); 2009 L'Ami (PU 30th)**

### **Robbie Power**

**Born:** May 27, 1981 **Background:** Enjoyed the biggest victory of his career in the 2007 Crabbie's Grand National when urging Silver Birch to a thrilling three quarters of a length triumph. Power is the son of legendary Irish showjumper and trainer Captain Con Power, who is regarded as the top man in Ireland to deal with jumping issues in horses. A silver medallist at the European Junior Showjumping Championships in 2000, Power made the switch to jump racing the following year and rode his first winner on only his third attempt when partnering his mother's Younevertoldme, trained by Jessica Harrington, in a hurdle race at Punchestown in December, 2001. He is attached to Harrington's County Kildare stable where he began as an amateur after receiving encouragement from Richard Dunwoody. His first winner as a professional came on the Paddy Mullins-trained Bob What at Leopardstown in February, 2002. He partnered the Mullins-trained Nearly A Moose to success in the 2003 Galway Plate. That victory came after he had sprung to prominence in Britain with a win aboard the Harrington-trained Intelligent in the Midlands Grand National earlier in the year. He was honoured at the 2004 Irish Jump Racing Awards as the leading claiming rider and in August of that year he partnered his first Australian winner to clinch victory in the annual Irish jump jockey challenge down under. A broken bone in a foot, sustained in a schooling accident, cost him the winning ride on Newmill in the 2006 Queen Mother Champion Chase. He followed his 2007 Crabbie's Grand National triumph with a sensational victory aboard 20/1 shot Silent Oscar in the ACC Bank Champion Hurdle at Punchestown, defeating hot favourite Mac's Joy by a neck. Power remains affiliated to the Harrington stable and rode the yard's Bostons Angel to win three Grade One novice chases including the RSA Chase at the Cheltenham Festival in 2011. He also rode Oscars Well to a pair of Grade One novice hurdle triumphs for Harrington. Power has completed the course in four of his eight starts in the Crabbie's Grand National. Power also enjoyed Grade One success on Jezki who landed the Future Champions Novice Hurdle at Leopardstown in 2013 before going on to finish third behind Champagne Fever in the Supreme Novices' Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival. He also took the Guinness Galway Hurdle with Missunited in 2013. Power now mixes showjumping with racing and won the Speed Derby at Hickstead in 2013.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2005 Spot Thedifference (18th); 2007 SILVER BIRCH (WON); 2008 Nadover (7th); 2009 Silver Birch (FELL 22nd); 2011 Killyglen (FELL 27th); 2012 Killyglen (UR 8th); 2013 Joncol (PU 19th); 2015 Owega Star (15th)**

# Goonyella (IRE) 9-10-08

**Breeding:** br g Presenting – Miss Fresher (Pampabird)

**Breeder:** Mrs C T & Miss S Berry

**Born:** April 20, 2007

**Owner:** Ann & Alan Potts Partnership

**Trainer:** Jim Dreaper IRE

**Jockey:** Jonathan (J J) Burke

**Form:** 33P1/25827/2U7312-3942

\*Sold as a yearling for €34,000 and acquired by his present connections as an unraced three-year-old for €55,000. His sire, the four-time champion, already has a Grand National winner to his credit in Ballabriggs.

\*Like many of the Potts family horses, his name has a mining connection. He is named after an open-cut coal mine in central Queensland, where the haulage trucks have the names of racehorses.

\*Started his career with one bumper run for Nigel Twiston-Davies before reverting to pointing (very successfully) for a season and working his way back to the mainstream through hunter chasing.

\*Has proved a thorough stayer and is one of the few in the field with form at four miles and more, for example a victory in last year's Midlands Grand National at Uttoxeter and runner-up spot in a photo for the Scottish Grand National the following month.

\*Has run twice over the Grand National fences, unseating at the first in the 2014 Becher Chase and completing the same contest a year later, last of nine finishers.

**Race record: Starts 21; Wins 3 2nd 3rd 4. Win & Place Prize Money: £153,906.**

## Ann & Alan Potts Partnership

Alan Potts (born 1937) established the Derbyshire-based MMD Group in 1978 after the National Coal Board asked him for a way to prevent large lumps of coal blocking conveyor belts. Potts came up with a sizing machine that became the standard for all UK pits. Since then, MMD has branched out into increasingly sophisticated mining and quarrying equipment worldwide. The company is owned and run by Potts and his wife Ann. Potts was born in Great Houghton, South Yorkshire and started working at the age of 15 as a sweeper-up in the pit fitting shop at Houghton Main Colliery. He quickly progressed on the NCB's apprenticeship and management schemes, meaning that by age of 40 he was area mechanical engineer with 14 mines under his supervision, and inventing machinery as he went along. Having been interested in racing since he was teenager, Potts teamed up with Irish trainer Henry de Bromhead in 2005 after reading an article in the Racing Post Weekender about the trainer. The best horse he has owned to date is seven-time Grade One winner Sizing Europe, winner of the Racing Post Arkle Chase in 2010 and the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase in 2011. He also won the Glenfarclas Cross Country Chase at the Cheltenham Festival with Sizing Australia in 2011 and also enjoyed Grade One success at Aintree in 2015 with Sizing Granite in the Maghull Novices' Chase

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 2014 Buckers Bridge (11th)**

## Jim Dreaper (Greenogue, Kilsallaghan, Co Dublin)

**Born:** January 30, 1951 **Background:** Dreaper comes from one of the most famous families in Irish racing. His father, Tom, trained the greatest steeplechaser of them all, Arkle, as well as Flyingbolt, who is seen as by many as the second-best to his stablemate. As a jockey, Dreaper rode Black Secret to second place in the Grand National, losing by a neck by Specify in 1971. Black Secret also finished third behind Well To Do when trained by Dreaper in 1972. He took out his training licence at the age of 20 and got straight to work, clocking up his first win just two months into his career in the Schweppes Gold Trophy with Good Review in 1972. He was champion jumps trainer in Ireland in each of his first five seasons and, in 1974, he trained Colebridge to win the Irish Grand National, winning with Brown Lad the following two years and again in 1978. He also trained the winners of the Cheltenham Gold Cup, Queen Mother Champion Chase and World Hurdle in 1975 with Ten Up, Lough Inagh and Brown Lad respectively. Dreaper has an enviable list of wins to his name. Ten Up landed the 1974 RSA Chase and the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup. Brown Lad won the 1974 Sun Alliance Hurdle at Cheltenham, the Reynoldstown Chase at Ascot and the Lloyds Bank Hurdle in Cheltenham in 1975. He became the only horse to win three Irish Grand Nationals in 1975, 1976 and again in 1978. The 1980s saw the arrival of the hugely talented Carvill's Hill. While he was a troubled horse, he won the 1989 Irish Gold Cup among others before being sold to owner Paul Green, who transferred the horse to Martin Pipe. In recent years, the stable flag bearers have been Notre Pere, who won the 2008 Welsh National at Chepstow and the 2009 Punchestown Gold Cup and 2015 Midlands National winner Goonyella. Goonyella will be Dreaper's first Crabbie's Grand National runner since Hard Case fell in the race in 1988. He has had four runners in the race in total. **Major wins include:** Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup (1975 Ten Up); Irish Grand National (1974 Colebridge; 1975, 1976, 1978 Brown Lad); Irish Gold Cup (1989 Carvill's Hill); Punchestown Chase (1990 Carvill's Hill, 1994, 1995 Merry Gale); Welsh National (2008 Notre Pere); Punchestown Gold Cup (2009 Notre Pere).

**Previous Crabbie's Grand National runners (all runners from 1980 – placed beforehand): 1972 Black Secret (3rd); 1981 Barney Maclyvie (Fell 1st); 1986 Kilkilowen (13th); 1988 Hard Case (Fell 19th)**

## Jonathan (J J) Burke

**Born:** December 23, 1995 **Background:** The son of Co Cork trainer Liam Burke, Jonathan Burke is one of the weighing room's rising young stars. The 20-year-old from Conna turned professional in May, 2014, on the advice of Ted Walsh. Last season, he was appointed first jockey to the powerful Alan and Ann Potts string in Ireland, replacing Andrew Lynch. Burke broke a bone in his neck in a pony race at the age of 15 and took out an amateur licence the following year. As an amateur, his highest-profile victory came on Very Much So for Willie Mullins (for whom he had been riding out since the age of 11) in the Goffs Land Rover Bumper at Punchestown in April, 2014, and among the paid ranks he took his first Grade One prize on the Potts' Sizing John, trained by Henry De Bromhead, in the Future Champions Novices' Hurdle at Leopardstown in December, 2014. He rode his first winner in Britain on Goonyella, a Potts colourbearer trained by Jim Dreaper, in the Midlands Grand National at Uttoxeter in March, 2015 and enjoyed Grade One success at Aintree last season when Sizing Granite took the Maghull Novices' Chase. **Crabbie's Grand National record: no previous rides**

# Hadrian's Approach (IRE) 9-10-06

**Breeding:** b g High Chaparral - Gifted Approach (Roselier)

**Breeder:** Marie Gavin

**Born:** June 6, 2006

**Owner:** Richard & Lizzie Kelvin-Hughes

**Trainer:** Nicky Henderson

**Jockey:** Nico de Boinville

**Form:** 1F/1F2235/2U101/6P-7

\*Biggest win came in the 2014 Grade Three bet365 Gold Cup Handicap Chase at Sandown, and in so doing beat a former Hennessy Gold Cup winner, Burton Port. He has struggled to re-capture this sort of form over the last few seasons.

\*He is a son of dual Derby hero High Chaparral and the sire's first runner in the Crabbie's Grand National.

\*Hadrian's Approach will have to overcome his trainer's moderate record in the race. Nicky Henderson will be attempting to win this for the first time, having had 36 runners in it before.

**Race record: Starts: 16; Wins: 4; 2nd: 3; 3rd: 1; Win & Place Prize Money: £144,750**

## Richard & Lizzie Kelvin-Hughes

Richard Kelvin-Hughes (born May 4, 1955) had a childhood immersed in ponies and horses. He was a member of the Pony Club, which led him to the point-to-point field, then to top-class eventing. He was involved in training the Canadian team for the 1976 Montreal Olympics. He then moved into property development. He left Britain in the 1989 for the Carribean where he developed properties. He returned and in 1994, soon after he returned, created General Practice Group Ltd, which is now one of the leading companies in medical centres. **Racing Interests:** He and his wife Lizzie have built up their ownership of racehorses and have a particular interest in breeding. In the early days of their ownership they were very much defined by their good race mares like, Chomba Womba and My Petra. The stud they own, Trull House, became the new sponsor of the mares' novices hurdle at The Festival in 2016. They have had a lot success on racecourses and have owned one Cheltenham Festival winner when Andytown landed the Martin Pipe Conditional Jockeys' Handicap Hurdle in 2009. This is their first runner in the Crabbie's Grand National. They are based at the Knarsdale estate in Northumberland.

**Crabbie's Grand National: no previous runners**

## Nicky Henderson

**Born** - Lambeth, London, on December 10, 1950 **Background** - The son of financier and amateur jockey John Henderson MBE, who founded Racecourse Holdings Trust, the forerunner for Jockey Club Racecourses, he was educated at Eton and the Royal Agricultural College. He worked for stockbrokers Cazenove in London and Australia, where he gained experience riding work at Randwick, before devoting himself full-time to racing. Henderson first made his name in Britain as an amateur rider, finishing runner-up three times in the non-professional championship. His main wins as a jockey came on Happy Warrior in the 1977 Fox Hunters Chase at Aintree and on Acquaint in Sandown's Imperial Cup in the same year. Henderson recorded his 78th and final win on Rolls Rambler in the Horse & Hound Cup at Stratford in June, 1978. He became assistant trainer to Fred Winter in 1974 and received his own training licence in July, 1978, taking over from Roger Charlton at Windsor House Stables in Lambourn, Berkshire. He moved to Seven Barrows, to the north of the village, in 1992, after swapping yards with Peter Walwyn. One of Britain's leading Jump trainers, Henderson has sent out over 2,500 winners and been at the top of his profession since 1985. His unprecedented tally of 55 wins at The Festival includes a joint record five Stan James Champion Hurdles, six JCB Triumph Hurdles, five Racing Post Arkle Chases, two Timico Cheltenham Gold Cups, four Betway Queen Mother Champion Chases, two Ryanair World Hurdles and two Ryanair Chases. **First Winner As A Trainer** - Dukery at Uttoxeter, October 14, 1978. **Accolades:** Nicky Henderson is the all-time leading trainer at The Festival with 55 successes. He has won the Jump trainers' championship three times - 1985/86, 1986/87 and 2012/2013.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1979 Zongalero (2nd); 1980 Zongalero (Refused 20th); 1981 Zongalero (FELL 22nd); 1982 Sun Lion (FELL 3rd); 1983 Spartan Missile (UR 22nd); 1984 Spartan Missile (16th); 1985 Classified (5th); 1986 Classified (3rd), The Tsarevich (7th); 1987 The Tsarevich (2nd), Classified (UR 25th); 1988 The Tsarevich (7th); 1990 Brown Windsor (4th); 1991 Ten Of Spades (14th); 1991 Master Bob (PU bef 19th); 1992 Brown Windsor (FELL 6th); 1994 Henry Mann (FELL 1st); 1995 Tinryland (FELL 1st); 1998 Pashto (FELL 1st); 1999 Fiddling The Facts (FELL 22nd); 2000 Esprit De Cotte (FELL 22nd); 2001 Esprit De Cotte (UR 11th), 2002 Marlborough (FELL 1st), Goguenard (FELL 1st); 2003 Katarino (UR 15th); 2005 Fondmort (PU 28th); 2006 Juveigneur (FELL 1st), Iris Royal (PU bef 17th), 2007 Liberthine (5th); 2009 Golden Flight (FELL 1st); Fleet Street (UR 18th); 2012 Shakalakaboomboom (9th); 2013 Roberto Goldback (UR last); 2014 Hunt Ball (17th), Long Run (FELL 9th), Shakalakaboom (PU 20th) Triolo D'Alene (PU 22nd)**

## Nico de Boinville

**Born:** Hampshire, August 14, 1989, **Background:** Learnt his trade on horses in eventing and won a novice class at the Horse of the Year Show when he was nine. He comes from a family where equestrian competition at the top level is second nature. His mother was on the national dressage squad, while her sister, Philippa, rode at Badminton, and is now married to the trainer, Pat Chamings. De Boinville was educated at Bradfield College in Berkshire where he completed A-Levels and gained a place at Newcastle University to read history and politics. This stint at university was short-lived, he dropped out after six weeks and returned home to Hampshire to pursue life as a jockey. Before university he worked as a pupil assistant to Richard Gibson in Chantilly. De Boinville's ambition to become a Jump jockey led him to Seven Barrows where he mixed working at Nicky Henderson's famous yard with riding in point-to-points. De Boinville turned professional in 2014. Although Henderson still remains his premier employer, he also regularly rides for Wantage-based trainer Mark Bradstock, who trained Conegree to win the 2015 Betfred Cheltenham Gold Cup to provide the jockey's biggest success. De Boinville rode his first winner at the Cheltenham Festival in 2014 on Whisper in the Coral Cup, a horse he also partnered to victory in the Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle at Aintree a year later. This season, he had to Cheltenham Festival successes - the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase on Sprinter Sacre and the Sky Bet Supreme Novices' Hurdle on Altior, both for Henderson. Hadrian's Approach is his first ride in the Grand National.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: No previous rides**

## Holywell (IRE) 9-10-12

**Breeding:** b g Gold Well — Hillcrest (IRE) (Thatching)

**Breeder:** Patrick Doyle

**Born:** May 5, 2007

**Owner:** Gay Smith

**Trainer:** Jonjo O'Neill

**Jockey:** Richie McLernon

**Jump Form:** 2222124/32U1111/3U143-54P2

\*Out of sorts this season before finishing second under top-weight in the Grade Three Ultima Handicap Chase at the Cheltenham Festival on March 15.

\*Fourth to Coneygree in the 2015 Cheltenham Gold Cup and then third in the Grade One Betfred Bowl at Aintree.

\*Two-time winner at the Cheltenham Festival, capturing the Listed Pertemps Final over hurdles in 2013 and the Ultima Handicap Chase in 2014.

\*Ended the 2013/14 season as the highest-rated novice chaser in England or Ireland after a 10-length demolition of Don Cossack in the Grade One Betfred Mildmay Novices' Chase at Aintree.

**Jump race record: Starts: 25 Wins: 7 2nd: 7 3rd: 4 Win & Place Prize Money: £311,565**

### Gay Smith

**Background:** Barbados-based Gay Smith has enjoyed four Cheltenham Festival successes (twice with Holywell, Black Jack Ketchum and Spectroscope) although she is best-known in racing through the exploits of her husband Derrick, a key owner in the Coolmore partnerships. A former Ladbrokes trading director, who became involved in currency trading, Derrick Smith was said to be worth £590 million in the 2015 Sunday Times Rich List. Business interests include, with his racing partners John Magnier and Michael Tabor, Barchester nursing homes, pub group Mitchells & Butlers and the Sandy Lane Hotel in Barbados. Smith also owns property in Florida. **Racing interests:** Joined Coolmore as an investor in 2004 and his purple silks with white seams, purple and white striped sleeves and purple cap have become a common sight atop such horses as 2012 Investec Derby winner Camelot and Australia, winner of the Epsom Classic in 2014. Others to sport his silks include Irish Derby winner Treasure Beach, 2011 Breeders' Cup Turf and triple Investec Coronation Cup victor St Nicholas Abbey, Ascot Gold Cup winner Fame And Glory, Simply Perfect, Astronomer Royal, St Leger hero Leading Light, Mastercraftsman and the 2010 Irish Derby and Irish Champion Stakes winner Cape Blanco as well as Australian import So You Think. The Smiths are also successful owners in Barbados, while their son Paul owns Kingston Hill, winner of the 2014 St Leger. **Crabbie's Grand National record: 2014 Twirling Magnet (Fell 1st)**

### Jonjo O'Neill (Temple Guiting, Gloucestershire)

Jonjo O'Neill has established himself as one of the top Jump trainers and enjoyed his best season in 2013/14, with 134 British winners and over £1.5 million in prize money. The trainer's biggest success came when he sent out the 2010 Crabbie's Grand National winner Don't Push It, owned by J P McManus and ridden by A P McCoy. It was a first Crabbie's Grand National success for all of them. He has also saddled the runner-up twice, with Clan Royal (2004) and Sunnyhillboy (2012), plus two thirds. However, as a jockey, he endured terrible luck in the race and failed to complete the course on each of his eight rides. He retired from the saddle at the end of the 1985/86 season, having been champion Jump jockey twice. O'Neill survived a battle with lymphatic cancer not long after that. He started training near Penrith, Cumbria, in 1987 and moved to his present base at Jackdaws Castle in Gloucestershire, near Cheltenham, when the yard was bought by J P McManus in 2001. There has been considerable investment in facilities since and a growing ambition. He has been leading training at Aintree's Crabbie's Grand National Festival four times, with three wins over the three days in 2010, the same number in 2007, four in 2003 and four again in 2002. He has also sent out 26 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and trained two Royal Ascot winners on the Flat. **Born** - April 13, 1952. **Background** - Champion Jump jockey twice (1977/78 and 1979/80) and set a then-record for winners in a season (149) in his first championship year. The most sensational moment of his riding career came when he won the Cheltenham Gold Cup on Dawn Run in 1986 as the mare became the only horse to win that trophy after having previously captured the Champion Hurdle (1984), again with O'Neill in the saddle. He also won the Gold Cup on Alverton (1979) and the Champion Hurdle on Sea Pigeon (1980). He enjoyed nine Cheltenham Festival successes as a jockey and partnered 901 winners in all. **First winner as a trainer** - Shelbourne, Ayr, January 30, 1987 **Other major wins at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival:** Aintree Anniversary 4-Y-O Juvenile Hurdle: 2002 Quazar; Betfred Bowl: 2007 Exotic Dancer, Doom Bar Aintree Hurdle: 2004 Rhinestone

Cowboy; Betfred Mildmay Novices' Chase: 2014 Holywell, Aintree Melling Chase: 2010 Albertas Run; Crabbie's Topham Chase: 2003 Clan Royal, Doom Bar Sefton Novices' Hurdle: 2003 Iris's Gift, 2006 Black Jack Ketchum, Weatherbys Private Banking Champion Standard Open NHF Race: 2003 Classic Native, Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle: 2004 Iris's Gift **Other big-race wins as a trainer include:** Cheltenham Gold Cup (2012 Synchronised), JCB Triumph Hurdle (2003 Spectroscope), World Hurdle (2004 Iris's Gift, 2014 More Of That), RSA Chase (2008 Albertas Run), Ryanair Chase (2010 & 2011 Albertas Run), JLT Novices' Chase (2014 Taquin Du Seuil), Christmas Hurdle (2002 & 2003 Intersky Falcon), Fighting Fifth Hurdle (2002 Intersky Falcon), Irish Grand National (2007 Butler's Cabin, 2014 Shutthefrontdoor), Betfred Becher Chase (2003 Clan Royal), December Gold Cup (1999 Legal Right, 2006 Exotic Dancer), Lexus Chase (2008 Exotic Dancer, 2011 Synchronised), Welsh National (2002 Mini Sensation, 2010 Synchronised), Champion Stayers' Hurdle (2007 Refinement), Paddy Power Gold Cup (2006 Exotic Dancer, 2013 Johns Spirit) **Crabbie's Grand National record: 2003 Carbury Cross (7th); 2004 Clan Royal (2nd), Joss Naylor (PU 19th); 2005 Simply Gifted (3rd), Shamawan (21st), Native Emperor (UR 9th), Clan Royal (CO 22nd); 2006 Clan Royal (3rd), Risk Accessor (5th); 2007 Clan Royal (11th); 2008 Bob Hall (PU 19th), Butler's Cabin (FELL 22nd); 2009 Butler's Cabin (7th), Reveillez (BD 3rd), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th); 2010 DON'T PUSH IT (WON), Can't Buy Time (FELL 8th); 2011 Don't Push It (3rd), Quolibet (UR 11th), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th); 2012 Sunnyhillboy (2nd), Synchronised (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 10th); 2013 Lost Glory (PU 17th), Sunnyhillboy (UR 30th); 2014 Twirling Magnet (FELL 1st), Burton Port (UR 2nd); 2015 Shutthefrontdoor (5th)**

### **Richie McLernon**

**Born:** October 22, 1986 **Background:** Cork-born Richie McLernon grew up surrounded by horses, riding ponies and hunting. His parents, Philip and Betty, were both successful amateur riders while his uncle, Tommy Carmody, was a leading professional jockey, riding the 1986 Champion Chase winner Buck House and finishing second (1984) and fourth (1985) in the Grand National on Greasepaint. Another uncle, Bill McLernon, is one of Ireland's winning-most amateur riders. After graduating from the Christian Brothers college in Cork in 2005, McLernon joined leading Irish point-to-point trainer Eugene O'Sullivan, striking up a great acquaintance with Arctic Times, whom he partnered to eight victories. He made the move to become a conditional jockey at Jonjo O'Neill's stable in 2007 and rode five winners in his first season. In 2012, he partnered his first winner at the Cheltenham Festival on Alfie Sherrin in the Ultima Business Solutions Handicap Chase and added a second in 2013 on Holywell in the Pertemps Final. Holywell gave him a third in 2014 in the Ultima Business Solutions Handicap Chase. He came agonisingly close to winning the 2012 Grand National on the O'Neill-trained Sunnyhillboy but Neptune Collonges denied the pair by a nose in the closest finish in the history of the race. McLernon signed a two-year sponsorship deal with Swindon-based Regulatory Finance Solutions in 2015.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2010 Can't Buy Time (FELL 8th); 2011 Can Buy Time (FELL 18th); 2012 Sunnyhillboy (2nd); 2013 Sunnyhillboy (UR 30th); 2014 Twirling Magnet (FELL 1st); 2015 Court By Surprise (PU 18th)**

# Home Farm (IRE) 9-10-04

**Breeding:** b g Presenting — Tynelucy (IRE) (Good Thyne (USA))

**Breeder:** Cathal Ennis

**Born:** May 24, 2007

**Owner:** Chris Jones

**Trainer:** Henry de Bromhead IRE

**Jockey:** Andrew Lynch

**Form:** 79/15P513/357P/1F7P8-46

\*Winner of three races under rules and one point-to-point, but has not won since 2014, when he landed a listed chase at Thurles.

\*Bought for a huge €200,000 at the Goffs sale in May 2011.

\*This will be the horse's first run over fences this season, having had both runs over hurdles, in which he finished down the field.

**Race record: Starts 19 Wins: 3 2nd: 0 3rd: 2 Win & Place Prize Money: £50,583**

## Chris Jones

Chris Jones is founder and CEO of Jones Investments, Dublin-based specialists in commercial, residential and investment properties. He is a director of Leopardstown Racecourse. Chris Jones' father, also Chris Jones, owned good horses with Arthur Moore, to whom the family are related by marriage. They include Klairon Davis, winner of the Queen Mother Champion Chase at the 1996 Cheltenham Festival, What A Charm and Tiger Cry. As well as Henry de Bromhead, Chris Jones jnr also has horses with Gordon Elliott, including recent Cheltenham Festival runner Noble Endeavour, and Andrew Lynch.

## No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

## Henry de Bromhead (County Waterford, Ireland)

**Born:** October 28, 1972 **Background:** De Bromhead is the son of former farmer and trainer Harry de Bromhead. He initially trained to be an accountant but left college after realising that this career was not for him. He took a job at Coolmore Stud and worked with Robert Alner in Dorset, as well as with his father, before joining Sir Mark Prescott's Newmarket yard. He also worked at Tattersalls for three months before returning to Coolmore Stud in 1998. After his father had been incapacitated by a stroke in 1999, he took over the reins at the Co Waterford yard and sent out his first winner with his very first runner when Fidalus won at Tramore on New Year's Day in 2000. De Bromhead trained a stream of winners in his first few years – including Feeling Grand, River Clodagh and Whatareyouhaving – but his career was to take a different direction when he took a phone call from Alan Potts in 2004, who wanted to buy his smart pointer Oscar India. Although de Bromhead was reluctant to sell Oscar India, he did persuade Potts to buy two horses from him and, more importantly, keep them in his yard. The two that Potts bought had wretched luck (one died of colic and the other suffered a career-ending injury on the gallops) but Potts was undeterred and bought 14 horses in the summer of 2005 to send to de Bromhead. One of those horses, Sizing Europe, went on to propel de Bromhead into the big time. The son of Pistolet Bleu won the Grade One Irish Champion Hurdle in January, 2008, before embarking on a chase campaign which saw him progress into one of the best two-milers of his generation. He won the Queen Mother Champion Chase in March, 2011, as well as the Grade One Tingle Creek Chase in December, 2011. De Bromhead trained Special Tiara to win the Doom Bar Maghull Novices' Chase at Aintree in April of 2013 and captured the same races in 2015 with Sizing Granite. **Major wins include:** Irish Champion Hurdle (2008 Sizing Europe); Irish Arkle Chase (2010 An Cathaoir Mor); Arkle Challenge Trophy (2010 Sizing Europe); Queen Mother Champion Chase (2011 Sizing Europe); Tingle Creek Chase (2011 Sizing Europe); Doom Bar Maghull Novices' Chase (2013 Special Tiara); Boylesports.com Champion Chase (2014 Sizing Europe); Paddy Power Future Champions Novices' Chase (2014 Sizing John); Bet365 A P McCoy Celebration Chase (2015 Special Tiara); StanJames.com Fighting Fifth Hurdle (2015 Identity Thief).

**Previous Crabbie's Grand National runners: 2014 Bucker's Bridge (11th)**

## Andrew Lynch

**Born:** October 5, 1984, and raised in Ashbourne, Co Meath **Background:** Lynch made his debut as an amateur in a Fairyhouse bumper in April, 2001, and enjoyed a first success 13 months later when Tristernagh landed a novice hurdle at Downpatrick on May 18, 2002. But he struggled for winners over the next two years before a more productive 2004/05 campaign persuaded Lynch to turn professional at the end of July, 2005. He recorded a first Grade One success when scoring on the Jim Dreaper-trained Notre Pere in a novices' chase at Leopardstown in December, 2007. He posted a first big-race success in Britain in March, 2006, when he partnered the Ado McGuinness-trained Victram to success in the Imperial Cup at Sandown and he was also on board Notre Pere when he triumphed in the 2008 Welsh National at Chepstow. Lynch enjoyed a pair of wins at the Cheltenham Festival in both 2010 and 2011, including the superb victories of Sizing Europe in the Arkle Trophy Chase and the Queen Mother Champion Chase. He also enjoyed three Grade One victories on Flemenstar for trainer Peter Casey. Lynch is bidding to complete a notable Derby-Grand National double, having won the Amateur Derby on Tender Falcon at Epsom Downs in August, 2004.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 2011 Vic Venturi (BD 2nd); 2012 Treacle (FELL 10th); 2014 Buckers Bridge (11th); 2015 Rubi Light (UR 3rd)**

## Just A Par (IRE) 9-10-6

**Breeding:** b g Island House – Thebrownhen (Henbit)

**Breeder:** Sean Whelan

**Born:** April 5, 2007

**Owner:** Graham Roach and Paul Barber

**Trainer:** Paul Nicholls

**Jockey:** Sean Bowen

**Form:** 1122/21476/5P42031-092

\*Was bred in Co Galway by Sean Whelan from an unraced mare from a good chasing family, that of The Langholm Dyer and Rambling Artist. He is the sole winner by his late sire Island House.

\*Failed to make his reserve when unsold as a foal at €6,400, but made £260,000 when offered as a five-year-old with wins in a point-to-point and a Punchestown hurdle under his girth.

\*His price tag makes him the most expensive auction purchase in the field.

\*Has two victories for his current connections, most notably in last year's Bet365 Gold Cup at Sandown, where he beat two Grand National rivals in Vics Canvas and Le Reve.

\*Has run twice at Aintree – in 2013 he was second to At Fishers Cross in the Grade One Sefton Novices' Hurdle (after a runner-up spot to Many Clouds at Exeter) and two years ago was pulled up in the Becher Chase over the National fences.

\*After two runs on unsuitably soft ground, he ran a good National trial at Exeter in March staying on for second place under a big weight.

**Race record: Starts 18; Wins 3; 2nd 5; 3rd 1. Win & Place Prize Money: £148,950**

### Graham Roach

Graham Roach has long been one of the best-known figures on the National Hunt scene, and will always be associated with his dual Queen Mother Champion Chase winner, Viking Flagship, who died in retirement at the age of 13 in 2000. Roach, who was born on August 26, 1947, graduated from the hunting and point-to-point world to be a permit-holder from 1983 before taking a full training licence at the 200-acre Prideaux House overlooking St Austell Bay in Cornwall in 1989. He ceased training in 1991 when deciding his business must come first. He joined the family's Cornwall-based meat processing company Roach Foods aged 15 and in 1999 the company merged with Dalehead to form Flagship Foods, a supplier of meats to supermarkets and caterers. Danish company Tulip merged with Flagship Foods in 2004, with Roach Foods a subsidiary company, which made Roach a reported £70 million. The best horse he trained was Prideaux Boy, while he has still to own a better horse than the 24-time winner Viking Flagship, hero of the Queen Mother Champion Chase at the Cheltenham Festival in 1994 and 1995. Viking Flagship was also successful in the Melling Chase in 1995, after a tremendous battle with Martha's Son and Deep Sensation which will long be remembered by racegoers. Roach is often active at the sales, buying foals and yearlings who are raised at Prideaux House before being sent to trainer Paul Nicholls when three-quarters fit, with notable graduates including Best Mate's brother Cornish Rebel and Thisthatandtother, who both went on to Grade One glory. He still has around 10 horses in training with Paul Nicholls.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 2003 Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd); 2006 Cornish Rebel (PU 19th); 2007 Thisthatandtother (PU 30th)**

### Paul Barber

Paul Barber's family have farmed near Ditchat since the 1830s and he oversees a 2,000-strong dairy herd on 3,000 acres, having started with 150 cows on 150 acres that now produce 45 tonnes of cheese daily for Barbers and Maryland Farmhouse Cheese, run by Paul's brother Nicholas. Paul - who has been allergic to cheese since the age of five - was born on December 31, 1942, on the kitchen table in the house where he still lives, stating "I've never thought about living elsewhere" and despite no family involvement with racing, has been an owner since his purchase in 1958 of a horse that cost £450 and had to be paid for in instalments. He has never owned a Flat horse and his first winner was Crazy Slave, who scored in 1963. The best horse he has been involved with is the 2008 Cheltenham Gold Cup hero Denman, who also finished runner-up in the same race in 2009 and 2010. Other top-class horses he has owned include the 1999 Cheltenham Gold Cup winner See More Business. He paid £82,000 for Denman and refuses to pay over the odds for a horse after being stung when making a couple of expensive purchases following See More Business's success. "Back then I bought a couple of horses which to my mind cost too much money. One thing all horses have in common are that they are bloody expensive," he said. Others who have carried his colours include See More Indians, who won eight races out of 14, and the John Thorne-trained Artifice. Barber owns Nicholls's Manor Farm Stables, initially converted from a cow shed. Many of his best performers have had an initial grounding in point-to-points, either with

Liam Burke in Ireland or Barber's nephew Jack at Seaborough in Dorset. Barber and Roach teamed up to take the 2015 Bet365 Gold Cup at Sandown with Just A Par.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record (Paul Barber): 1996 Deep Bramble (PU bef 29th); 1998 General Crack (PU bef 11th), 2009 Big Fella Thanks (6th, owned jointly with Margaret Findlay); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th)**

### **Paul Nicholls (Manor Farm Stables, Ditcheat, Shepton Mallet, Somerset)**

**Born:** April 17, 1962 at Lydney, Gloucestershire **Background:** The son of a policeman, he grew up in Olveston. Started out in point-to-points after leaving school at 16 and worked for a couple of yards before becoming a conditional jockey with Josh Gifford for two years and then joining Devon trainer David Barons. He partnered 119 winners between 1980 and 1989, with his biggest British successes coming in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury on Broadheath (1986) and Playschool (1987). He struggled to keep his weight down and gave up race riding. Between 1989 and 1991, he was assistant trainer to Barons, who trained Broadheath and Playschool and sent out Seagram to win the 1991 Grand National. Has been training at Manor Farm Stables in Ditcheat, Somerset, since taking out a licence on November 1, 1991. Started out with eight horses. The facilities have kept on being improved. His daughter Megan is an apprentice jockey with trainer Richard Hannon. **Achievements:** Nine-time champion Jump trainer (2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2013/14, 2014/15) and became the first handler to accrue more than £4 million in a season in 2007/08. He gained his 2,000th winner at Down Royal on November 5, 2011, less than 20 years after taking his licence, making him the fastest Jump trainer to reach the landmark figure. Has sent out 40 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and is the jointly-third most successful trainer there. His successes include victories in the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (1999 Call Equiname, 2004 Azertyuiop, 2008 & 2009 Master Minded, 2015 Dodging Bullets), Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup (1999 See More Business, 2007 & 2009 Kauto Star, 2008 Denman) and the Ryanair World Hurdle (Big Buck's 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012). He also won the Stan James Champion Hurdle with Rock On Ruby in 2012. At Aintree, he captured the Crabbie's Grand National with Neptune Collonges in 2012 and sent out Big Buck's for four consecutive victories (2009 to 2012) in the Grade One Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle. He saddled Silviniaco Conti to win the Grade One Betfred Bowl in 2014 and 2015. He has been leading trainer at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival three times - in 2008, 2011 & 2015.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1992 Just So (6th); 1996 Vicompt De Valmont (10th), Deep Bramble (PU 29th), Brackenfield (UR 19th); 1997 Straight Talk (Fell 14th); 1998 What A Hand (Fell 1st), Court Melody (Fell 6th), General Crack (PU 11th); 1999 Strong Chairman (15th), Double Thriller (Fell 1st), 2000 Earthmover (Fell 4th), Torduff Express (Fell 13th), Flaked Oats (Fell 20th), Escartefigue (UR 30th); 2001 Earthmover (Fell 4th); 2002 Murt's Man (PU 17th), Ad Hoc (BD 27th); 2003 Montifault (5th), Fadalko (UR 6th), Ad Hoc (UR 19th), Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd), Torduff Express (UR 27th); 2004 Exit To Wave (PU 9th); 2005 Royal Auclair (2nd), Heros Collonges (8th), L'Aventure (15th), Ad Hoc (Fell 22nd); 2006 Royal Auclair (Fell 1st), Le Duc (UR 8th), Silver Birch (Fell 15th), Heros Collonges (UR 15th), Le Roi Miguel (PU 19th), Cornish Rebel (PU 19th); 2007 Le Duc (UR 6th), Royal Auclair (Fell 9th), Eurotrek (PU bef 22nd), Thisthatandtother (PU 30th); 2008 Cornish Sett (12th), Turko (Fell 25th), Mr Pointment (PU 30th); 2009 My Will (3rd), Big Fella Thanks (6th), Cornish Sett (17th), Eurotrek (PU 17th); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th), Tricky Trickster (9th), My Will (Fell 4th), Nozic (UR 20th); 2011 Niche Market (5th), Ornaïs (Fell 4th), The Tother One (Fell 6th), What A Friend (PU 27th); 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2013 Join Together (12th), What A Friend (PU 19th), Harry The Viking (PU 26th); 2014 Rocky Creek (5th), Hawkes Point (18th), Tidal Bay (UR 8th); 2015 Mon Parrain (11th), Rocky Creek (17th), Rebel Rebellion (PU 26th), Unioniste (FELL 5th)**

### **Sean Bowen**

**Born:** September 5, 1997 **Background:** Son of leading trainer Peter Bowen (himself once an amateur rider) and Karen Bowen, who was also an amateur jockey and finished third in the ladies' championship. A career in the saddle looked unlikely in his formative years as Bowen was allergic to horses and 'hated horses' until he was five. After a successful stint on the pony racing circuit and in point-to-points (champion UK novice rider), Bowen rode a winner on his first start under Rules as an amateur on Kozmina Bay at Uttoxeter in December 2013. Bowen turned professional at the beginning of last season and enjoyed a successful first campaign with 51 winners, taking the Bet365 Gold Cup at Sandown on On A Par for Paul Nicholls, for which he was awarded Jump Ride of the Year at the Lesters, and winning the conditional jockeys' title. He has already passed last season's total this winter. The majority of his victories so far have been for his father, but he has also had considerable success for Nicholls. His brother Mickey now trains point-to-pointers and hunter chasers (had the 50/1 second Dineur in the 2016 Crabbie's Fox Hunters') **Previous Crabbie's Grand National rides: 2015 Mon Parrain 11th**

## Katenko (FR) 10-10-6

**Breeding:** b g Laveron – Katiana (Villez)  
**Breeder:** Haras des Coudraies  
**Born:** Feb 16, 2006  
**Owner:** Andrew Brooks  
**Trainer:** Venetia Williams  
**Jockey:** Will Kennedy  
**Form:** 211/71F113/46F2P874/F0211/F4430/P-P0

\*Bred in Normandy at the Montesson family's Coudraies stud, which produces both trotters and jumpers. His unraced dam is from one of the nursery's best families - that of French champion chasers Katko and Kotkijet.

\*Was acquired by his current connections for €30,000 as six-year-old after three season's racing in France, where he won five times at Auteuil.

\*Scored twice, at Sandown and Cheltenham, in January 2013, but suffered an attack of colic and missed the Cheltenham Festival, and has raced only eight times since.

\*On his sole visit to Aintree finished fourth over the Mildmay fences at the 2013 December meeting. Tried his luck in the 2014 Gold Cup and came in last at 66/1.

\*Was off the track for a year before being pulled up on his comeback at Ascot in December, and then completed behind several Grand National rivals in the Grade Three Ultima Handicap Chase Cheltenham.

**Race record: Starts 32; Wins 7; 2nd 3; 3rd 2. Win & Place Prize Money: £302,244**

### Andrew Brooks

Andrew is an international businessman and currently chief executive officer of Ascot Underwriting Ltd. He joined Ascot at its inauguration in 2001 and was promoted to chief underwriting officer in 2005 and chief executive officer in 2008. His company supports racing through sponsorship. Brooks first got into racehorse ownership in 2009 and his string of horses have got bigger every season ever since. He owns most of his horses with Venetia Williams, and some with Dan Skelton. Katenko is his first runner over the National fences.

### No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

### Venetia Williams

**Born:** May 10, 1960, **Background:** Venetia Williams had a great deal of experience as an assistant trainer and rider before taking out a licence to train at her family's Herefordshire estate. She had 10 winners as an amateur through 1986-88 and rode in the 1988 Grand National on Marcolo, who knocked her unconscious when coming down at Becher's Brook. She broke her neck in a fall shortly afterwards and was forced to retire on medical advice. She gained experience around the world to further her knowledge of training, starting off with seven years as assistant to John Edwards at Sellack, only a few miles from where she is now based. She also had spells with Martin Pipe and Barry Hills, John Fulton in the United States and Colin Hayes in Australia. **Training Career:** She began with a string of limited size and talent but her success prompted great reaction and she regularly trains over 50 winners a season, recording a seasonal best of 90 in 2012/13. The popular grey Teeton Mill was her standard-bearer in the late 1990s, winning the 1998 Hennessy Gold Cup and King George VI Chase. Her first venture on the Flat yielded a Group Three winner when Stretarez won the 1998 Ormonde Stakes at Chester. She has recorded six wins at the Cheltenham Festival, the first of which being Samakaan in the 2000 Grand Annual Challenge Cup, and enjoyed the pinnacle of her career to date when winning the 2009 Grand National with 100/1 chance Mon Mome. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1997 Don't Light Up (Fell 13th), Celtic Abbey (Unseated 15th); 1998 Celtic Abbey (Fell 5th); 1999 General Wolfe (12th); 2000 Kingdom Of Shades (16th); 2001 Inis Cara (Fell 4th), General Wolfe (Brought Down 8th); 2002 Inis Cara (PU Bef 25th); 2003 Bramblehill Duke (Fell 2nd); 2007 Sonevafushi (PU Bef 29th), The Outlier (Unseated 19th); 2008 Mon Mome (10th) ; 2009 MON MOME (WON), Stan (Fell 7th); 2010 Mon Mome (Fell 26th), Flintoff (PU Bef 21st); 2012 Mon Mome (PU 22nd)**

### Will Kennedy

**Born:** October 2, 1981. **Background:** Will Kennedy grew up in Co Kildare. His father Vivian was a Flat jockey who then became a trainer, although he has now retired. His mother Kathleen makes racing silks. Will's older brother Vivian jnr, also a jockey, was killed in a fall at Huntingdon in November, 1988. After leaving school, Will spent six months working for Godolphin in Dubai before joining Michael Grassick as assistant trainer. He moved to Britain to ride for Noel Chance in 2002, and was champion conditional in 2006. He is enjoying his best season since he was a conditional jockey, with 46 winners in Britain to date (up April 7). His biggest victory has come on Ebony Express in the Imperial Cup at Sandown in 2015.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2015 Super Duty (PU 25th)**

## Kruzhlinin (GER) 9-10-07

**Breeding:** ch g Sholokhov (IRE) — Karuma (GER) (Surumu (GER))

**Breeder:** Gestut Kussaburg

**Born:** April 17, 2007

**Owner:** Paul & Clare Rooney

**Trainer:** Philip Hobbs

**Jockey:** Richard Johnson

**Form:** 60221/11241P2/4411730/72-15

\*Came home 10th in the 2014 Crabbie's Grand National when trained by Donald McCain.

\*Lightly-raced since 2014 and was switched to Philip Hobbs' yard at the beginning of this season.

\*Posted an eye-catching victory over Le Reve in a three-mile handicap chase at Kempton Park on January 12.

\*Behind fellow Crabbie's Grand National contenders Holywell and Morning Assembly when fifth in the Grade Three Ultima Handicap Chase at the Cheltenham Festival on March 15.

**Jump race record: Starts: 23; Wins 7 2nd: 5 3rd: 1 Win & Place Prize Money: £70,292**

### Paul & Clare Rooney

**Background:** Paul Rooney, 68, is originally from London (born July, 1947) and currently spends his time between St Boswells in the Scottish borders and Sussex where he founded the Horsham-based Rooney & Co. estate agents in 1981, which he now chairs. Ten years later, when he had 11 offices, he bought the south-eastern region of Prudential Property Services and formed Arun Estates. In 1993 Paul acquired Douglas Allen Spiro in East London and Essex. He moved back to the traditional trading names, Arun now trades under the brands of Ward & Partners, Cubitt & West, Douglas Allen, Pittis and Rooney & Co through over 100 branches. Paul's wealth was valued at £110 million in the 2015 Sunday Times Rich List. He decided to start his own estate agency based on his own frustrations when trying to buy a family home in Horsham. He also has a house building business. He and his wife Clare have a number of charitable foundations (the Rooney Foundation being the biggest), which focus mainly on children's disabilities and medical research. **Racing interests:** Paul and Clare, who were social racegoers, first became involved with racehorse ownership as partners in the Donald McCain-trained Danny Zuko, a four-time winner between 2007 and 2010. They bought a third of Danny Zuko for £4,000 in 2006/07 and then got the bug. Danny Zuko is now retired (2011) and lives at their home in the Scottish Borders, along with five others. They have stepped up their involvement considerably in recent seasons. Initially their horses were trained principally by Donald McCain, although they parted company with the Grand National-winning handler in a well-publicised split in October, 2015, when removing their 70 horses from the Cheshire-based trainer. The Rooneys now have 120 horses in training split among 24 different trainers and have also extended their ownership to Flat racing. Paul prefers Jump racing and Clare prefers the Flat. Jump jockey Jason Maguire, currently injured, is their racing manager. They also own another 2016 Crabbie's Grand National contender – The Last Samuri. Their colours are blue and yellow quarters.

**Previous Crabbie's Grand National runners: 2014 Kruzhlinin (10th)**

### Philip Hobbs (Bilbrook, Somerset)

**Born** July 26, 1955 **Background:** Philip was brought up surrounded by horses. His father Tony Hobbs farmed, and had a permit to train for many years, breeding several good horses to run in the family colours. After school at King's College, Taunton, Philip went on to Reading University and achieved a BSc honours degree. He rode at Hickstead, show jumping as a junior, and gained several point-to-point winners and winners under National Hunt rules as an amateur before turning professional at the age of 21. Partnered 160 winners in a 10-year riding career including the Black and White Gold Cup at Ascot, the Killiney Novice Chase and the Midlands Grand National on such good horses as West Tip and Artifice. Hobbs made four appearances in the Grand National as a professional jockey in the 1980s and, although one of the best horses he rode was West Tip, he didn't get the leg up on him in the National, with those four rides resulting in two falls, one ninth place and an 11th. He started training in August, 1985, with only six horses and was successful with his very first runner, North Yard at Exeter. He is now one of Britain's top Jump trainers and has gone close to winning the Crabbie's Grand National with What's Up Boys, second in 2002, Balthazar King, runner-up in in 2014 and Samlee, third in 1998. Philip's wife Sarah, whom he married in 1982, is the daughter of Bertie Hill, who won a gold medal in three-day eventing at the 1956 Olympics at Stockholm. They have three daughters, Caroline, Katherine and Diana. **Achievements:** He has trained over 2,000 winners, including 18 at the Cheltenham Festival. **Major**

**Wins include:** Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (2002 Flagship Uberalles), Stan James Champion Hurdle (2003 Rooster Booster), Racing Post Arkle Chase (2011 Captain Chris). **Aintree:** He has been leading trainer at the Grand National Festival at least three times – 2006, 2001 and 2000. His big wins at Aintree include Manifesto Novice's Chase (2012 Menorah), Anniversary 4-YO Juvenile Hurdle (2000 Lord Brex, 2006 Detroit City), Mildmay Novices' Chase (2001 What's Up Boys). **Crabbie's Grand National record: 1990 Gallic Prince (13th); Joint Sovereignty (FELL 19th); 1995 Gold Cap (13th); 1998 Samlee (3rd); Greenhill Tare Away (UR 27th); 1999 Samlee (10th); Bells Life (PU 26th); Mudahim (UR 6th); 2000 Village King (FELL 20th); Stormy Passage (Fell 22nd); 2001 Village King (FELL 8th); 2002 What's Up Boys (2nd); 2004 What's Up Boys (BD 6th); 2005 Double Honour (UR 21st); 2007 Zabenz (PU 7th), Monkerhostin (REF 7th); 2009 Zabenz (FELL 16th), Parsons Legacy (FELL 22nd); 2010 Dream Alliance (PU 24th); 2011 Quinz (PU 16th); 2012 Planet Of Sound (12th); 2013 Balthazar King (15th); 2014 Balthazar King (2nd), Chance Du Roy (6th); 2015 Chance Du Roy (10th), Gas Line Boy (FELL 1st), Balthazar King (FELL 8th)**

### **Richard Johnson**

**Born:** July 21, 1977 **Background:** Attended Belmont Abbey School, the alma mater of Peter Scudamore, before leaving at 16 to take a job with then champion trainer David Nicholson. He was born and raised at Madley, Herefordshire, where his parents have a farm. Johnson comes from racing stock as his mother Sue holds a licence to train, while his father Keith, who won the 1982 Midlands Grand National on Bridge Ash, and his grandfather Ivor were both good amateur riders. Johnson has been unlucky to ride mostly in the same era as Tony McCoy as he has finished runner-up to his rival in the jockeys' championship on 16 occasions, but this season, with his great rival retired, he is set to be champion Jump jockey for the first time. His first winner came at Hereford aboard Rusty Bridge on April 30, 1994, and he has gone on to capture some of racing's biggest prizes, notably the 2000 Gold Cup at Cheltenham aboard Looks Like Trouble and the 2002 Queen Mother Champion Chase on Flagship Uberalles, as well as Rooster Booster's famous triumph in the 2003 Champion Hurdle. Other top-flight winners he has partnered include Florida Pearl, Anzum, Mighty Man, Detroit City, Planet Of Sound, Landing Light, Menorah, Captain Chris and Reve De Sivola. He has a total of 20 winners at the Cheltenham Festival. He has a good record at Aintree and won the Crabbie's Topham Trophy over the Grand National course in 2001 on Gower Slave. He has twice finished second in the Crabbie's Grand National - What's Up Boys (2002) and Balthazar King (2014). He was the leading jockey at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival in 2002. He will equal the record for the number of rides in the Grand National in 2016 – reaching the 20-mark which McCoy reached in 2015. In 2007 he married Fiona Chance, daughter of the dual Cheltenham Gold Cup-winning trainer Noel Chance and they have three children – Willow, Casper and Percy. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1997 Celtic Abbey (UR 15th), 1998 Banjo (FELL 1st), 1999 Baronet (FELL 4th), 2000 Star Traveller (PU 27th); 2001 Edmond (FELL 15th); 2002 What's Up Boys (2nd); 2003 Behrajan (10th); 2004 What's Up Boys (BD 6th); 2005 Jakari (PU 20th); 2006 Therealbandit (PU 27th); 2007 Monkerhostin (REF 7th); 2008 Turko (FELL 25th); 2009 Parson's Legacy (FELL 22nd); 2010 Tricky Trickster (9th); 2011 Quinz (PU 16th); 2012 Planet Of Sound (12th); 2013 Balthazar King (15th); 2014 Balthazar King (2nd); 2015 Balthazar King (FELL 8th)**

## Le Reve (IRE) 8-10-8

**Breeding:** br g Milan – Open Cry (Montelimar)

**Breeder:** John Flood

**Born:** Feb 19, 2008

**Owner:** Pat Betts

**Trainer:** Lucy Wadham

**Jockey:** Harry Skelton

**Form:** 3451P1/U1U34P2/1P3123-P02615

\*Bred at the Flood family's Spratstown Stud in Co Wicklow. Sold as a foal for €10,500 and then again as an unraced three-year-old to his current connections for €140,000.

\*Is a half-brother to Join Together, runner-up in the Becher Chase over the National fences four years ago. His sire Milan has had a horse placed in the Crabbie's Grand National, the 2014 third Double Seven.

\*A rare Grand National contender trained in Newmarket. The last winner to be trained in the town was Gregalach in 1929, although 1934 hero Golden Miller was trained in a neighbouring village, Exning.

\*Has not run over less than three miles since his novice days and after airway surgery has produced some of his best performances this season, notably when runner-up to Grand National rival Krushlinin at Kempton in January and when winning at Sandown the following month in first-time blinkers.

**Race record: Starts 25; Wins 6; 2nd 3; 3rd 4. Win & Place Prize Money: £151,487**

### Pat Betts

Pat Betts (born March, 1933) has owned racehorses for many years. He owned horses such as Kopeck and Rouble, both of whom won black-type races when trained by Josh Gifford, and the Suffolk-based businessman also owned Gifford's final winner (Sandown, 2003), Skycab. When Gifford retired, Betts moved his horses to Lucy Wadham, although he still has a horse in training with Nick Gifford. Mark Tompkins trains for him on the Flat. Betts started in the haulage industry and branched out into the commercial vehicle accessory market. He owns Hatcher Components and Broadwater Mouldings Ltd, subsidiaries of PH Betts (Holdings) Ltd.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners**

### Lucy Wadham (Newmarket)

**Born:** March 5, 1958 **Background:** Former BBC journalist Lucy was brought up in London. She first trained point-to-pointers under a permit, and took out a full licence in 1997. She scored her first Grade One win with the mare United, who took the Grade One Champion 4YO Hurdle at Punchestown in 2005. Other major successes have come with the likes of El Dancer, who won the 2009 Grade Two Top Novices' Hurdle at Aintree, and 2011 Imperial Cup winner Alarazi. Lady Tiana gave Wadham her first Group Two triumph on the Flat when taking the Lancashire Oaks in 2015. Wadham was one of seven Newmarket trainers who tried their hand at race-calling at Newmarket last September in aid of charity. She is married to Justin, a solicitor and former director of the British Horseracing Authority. They have three daughters-Rosie, Mimi and India.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners**

### Harry Skelton

**Born:** September 20, 1989 **Background:** Harry Skelton is the son of legendary showjumper and Olympic gold medallist Nick, who himself almost became a jump jockey with David Nicholson before going on to represent his country in six Olympics. Not surprisingly, Harry grew up surrounded by horses and he learnt to ride on the same pony as his father, Oxo, and took part in some of the top pony showjumping competitions as a youngster. Skelton enjoyed a summer with Reg Hollinshead when aged 13 prior to a spell at Richard Hannon's yard after leaving school. He joined Paul Nicholls' yard, where his older brother Dan was assistant trainer, in October, 2005, but continued to show an interest on the Flat and took part in the Bollinger series for amateur riders in the summer of 2006. After partnering a handful of Nicholls' runners as an amateur, Skelton took the decision to turn professional on New Year's Day, 2007, and he partnered his first winner under Rules when scoring on Temper Lad in a conditional jockeys' selling handicap hurdle at Exeter on October 10, 2007. A superb campaign reached further heights in April, 2009, as Skelton once again linked up with Niche Market to triumph in the Irish Grand National at Fairyhouse. Skelton is now stable jockey to his brother Dan, who started training in 2012, and the pair have enjoyed considerable success so far, claiming a first Cheltenham Festival success last month with Superb Story in the Vincent O'Brien County Hurdle. The 2015/16 season has been Skelton's best to date with 94 winners as of April 6; previously his best total was 55 in the 2014/15 season.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2010 Niche Market (PU 27th); 2011 Niche Market (5th); 2012 Vic Venturi (REF 19th)**

## Many Clouds (IRE) 9-11-10

**Breeding:** br g Cloudings (IRE) - Bobbing Back (IRE) (Bob Back (USA))

**Breeder:** Aidan Aherne

**Born:** April 21, 2007

**Owner:** Trevor Hemmings

**Trainer:** Oliver Sherwood

**Jockey:** Leighton Aspell

**Form:** 190/21212P/1212B4/11161-6221

\*Won the 2015 Crabbie's Grand National by a length and three-quarters from Saint Are, giving owner Trevor Hemmings his third Grand National success, Leighton Aspell his second and Oliver Sherwood his first. Bidding to become first back-to-back winner since Red Rum in 1973/1974. Aspell is bidding to become the first jockey ever to win three Crabbie's Grand Nationals in succession.

\*Carried 11st 9lb to victory in the 2015 Crabbie's Grand National, the highest weight in the Aintree spectacular since Red Rum won with 12st in 1974. Is set to carry 1lb more in 2016.

\*Last seen out when landing Listed Premier Chase at Kelso on March 13, scoring impressively by 10 lengths from Unioniste.

\*Made three other appearances this season, doing best when second to Smad Place in the Grade Two BetBright Cup Chase at Cheltenham on January 30 and when occupying same position behind Don Poli in Listed chase over Mildmay fences at Aintree on December 5.

\*Landed a strong renewal of the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury in November, 2014 & the BetBright Cup Chase at Cheltenham in January, 2015.

\*Became the first Hennessy Gold Cup winner also to win the Crabbie's Grand National.

\*Half-brother to high-class hurdler and chaser The Tullow Tank.

**Race record: Starts: 24; Wins: 10; 2nd: 7; 3rd: 0; Win & Place Prize Money:£847,734**

### Trevor Hemmings CVO

**Born:** June 11, 1935 **Background:** Brought up in Woolwich Arsenal, South-East London, where his father worked at the Royal Ordnance factory. Was sent to Lancashire as a five-year-old during World War II and began life as a bricklayer's apprentice after leaving school at 15. Became involved in the Pontins holiday business and eventually owned the business. He sold Pontins to Scottish & Newcastle in exchange for a significant S & N shareholding in 1989. He bought back Pontins in 2000 but retained a stake in S & N, which netted him £218 million when the company was sold in January, 2008. Sold Blackpool Tower and the Winter Gardens to the North West resort's town council for £40 million in March, 2010. In 2012, agreed to sell his major shareholding in Arena Leisure Plc, which owned Folkestone, Lingfield, Southwell, Wolverhampton and Windsor racecourses and managed Doncaster and Worcester, to the Reuben brothers. Arena also has a major part of specialist broadcaster At The Races which owns some of British racing's media rights. Owns a share of Preston North End FC, the Trust Inns pub company and is chairman of the TJH Foundation, a charity which provides grants to organisations such as Macmillan Cancer Relief, St John Ambulance, Crimestoppers Trust, Royal National Lifeboat Association, the Injured Jockeys' Fund and Racing Welfare. In 2011, he was appointed a Commander of the Victorian Order (CVO) for his work as vice-president of the Princess Royal Trust Carers. In 2015, the Sunday Times estimated Hemmings' wealth at £675 million. As well as racehorses, he also has eventers who are ridden by Zara Phillips - she partnered the Hemmings-owned High Kingdom to win team silver in three-day eventing at London 2012. **Racing Interests:** Fulfilled greatest ambition when Hedgehunter carried his colours to victory in the 2005 Grand National. After years of trying, Hemmings had finally emulated his mentor Fred Pontin, owner of the 1971 National hero Specify, with his 13th Grand National runner. Ballabriggs added a second Crabbie's Grand National success in 2011 and Many Clouds a third in 2015. Tried to win Grand National for first time with Stan Mellor-trained Rubika, 14th in 1992. His first winner came on the Flat in 1985. Hemmings brings on young jumping stock at Gleadhill House Stud, near Chorley, Lancashire, managed by former trainer Mick Meagher, and at his Monymusk Stud in Co Cork. Hemmings, who was made an honorary Jockey Club member in December, 2006, is based on the Isle of Man and is said to have paid £12 million for the Ballavodan estate on the island where his retired horses live. Has enjoyed 11 winners at the Cheltenham Festival, headed by dual Ryanair Chase hero Albertas Run. **Crabbie's Grand National Achievements:** One of only four owners to have won the race three times along with Noel Le Mare (Red Run 1973, 1974 & 1977), James Machall (1873 Disturbance, 1874 Reugny, 1876 Regal) and Sir Charles Assheton-Smith (1893 Cloister, Jerry M 1912, Covertcoat 1913).

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1992 Rubika (14th); 2000 The Last Fling (7th); Esprit De Cotte (FELL 22nd); 2001 The Last Fling (UR 5th), Esprit De Cotte (UR 11th); 2002 Goguenard (FELL 1st), Beau (UR 14th); 2003 Southern Star (14th), Chives (PU 12th); 2004 Arctic Jack (FELL 1st), Southern Star (PU 9th), Hedgehunter (FELL 30th); 2005 HEDGEHUNTER (WON), Europa (20th); 2006 Hedgehunter (2nd), Juveigneur (FELL 1st), 2007 Hedgehunter (9th), Billyvodan (PU 19th); 2008 Cloudy Lane (6th), Hedgehunter (13th), Idle Talk (14th); 2009 Idle Talk (12th), Battlecry (16th), Cloudy Lane (UR 15th); 2010 Cloudy Lane (8th); 2011 BALLABRIGGS (WON), King Fontaine (11th); 2012 Ballabriggs (6th); 2013 Ballabriggs (PU 24th); 2014 Burton Port (UR 2nd), Vintage Star (PU 26th); 2015 MANY CLOUDS (WON)**

### **Oliver Sherwood (Lambourn, Berkshire)**

**Born:** March 23, 1955, at Chelmsford in Essex. **Background:** Father Nat was a farmer, racehorse owner, breeder and point-to-point rider. Mother Heather was also a point-to-point rider. Oliver's brother Simon was a champion amateur jockey who, after turning professional, was best known for his association with great chaser Desert Orchid. Although never joining the paid ranks, Oliver was a highly successful amateur rider - winning the 1979/80 amateur Jump championship - and rode three Cheltenham Festival winners as well as the 1980 Fox Hunters' Chase winner Rolls Rambler over the Grand National fences at Aintree among a total of 96 successes. Had one ride in the Grand National, finishing eighth on Venture To Cognac in 1983. Assisted trainers Gavin Pritchard-Gordon (pupil assistant on Flat 1974), Arthur Moore (assistant trainer 1975-77) and Fred Winter (an assistant 1978-84) before taking out a licence in the 1984/85 season from Rhonehurst Stables in Lambourn, the same yard that had Grand National success with Battleship in 1939. **Training success:** Made his mark in 1987 when The West Awake won what is now the Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham and the Mersey Novices' Hurdle at Aintree, where Aldino took that year's Anniversary 4YO Hurdle. It was the start of a golden decade that featured the top hurdler Large Action as well as Arctic Call, Cruising Altitude, Young Snugfit, Atrabates, Young Pokey, Rebel Song, Lord Of The River, Coulton, Berude Not To, Him Of Praise, Cenkos and Silver Wedge. His first Grand National runner Sacred Path started the 17/2 favourite in 1988 but fell at the first. After a number of quiet years, the latest two seasons have seen an upturn in Sherwood's fortunes with 2014 Hennessy Gold Cup and 2015 Crabbie's Grand National hero Many Clouds leading the way. He had also had Grade Two success with Deputy Dan and Puffin Billy. Married to former jockey Tarnya (47 winners under Rules) in 1993 & they have two children, Sabrina & Archie. The then Tarnya Davis partnered 100/1 chance Numerate in the 1989 Grand National, pulling up before the 21st. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1988 Sacred Path (FELL 1st); 1989 Beamwam (PU 18th); 1998 Him Of Praise (REF 27th); 2010 Eric's Charm (FELL 1st); 2015 MANY CLOUDS (WON)**

### **Leighton Aspell**

**Born:** June 12, 1976 **Background:** He is one of the few jockeys to have a dedicated fan club. Began his racing life as an apprentice with noted tutor Reg Hollinshead and rode 10 winners on the Flat (the first was Prime Painter at Hamilton in May, 1993), before increasing weight forced him to switch to jumping. Joined the late Josh Gifford's Findon yard and partnered his first winner over jumps at Huntingdon in May, 1995, aboard Karar, trained by Gifford's former stable jockey Richard Rowe. Has won the Welsh National twice, with L'Aventure (2005) and Supreme Glory (2001), and experienced Grade One success in the Champion Four-Year-Old Hurdle at Punchestown on United in 2005. **Retirement & Comeback:** In July, 2007, Aspell announced his retirement from the saddle and went to work for Flat trainer John Dunlop at Arundel for an 18-month spell. However, he made a return to race riding in April, 2009, stating that he missed the camaraderie of the weighing room and the thrill of race riding. **Crabbie's Grand National:** Came close to a fairytale first ride in the National in 2003 when finishing second aboard Supreme Glory. Had another excellent spin in 2006 on Ballycassidy, who took up the running at Valentine's on the first circuit and jumped for fun in the lead before taking a spectacular tumble at Valentine's second time. He became the first jockey to win the Crabbie's Grand National in consecutive years since Brian Fletcher on Red Rum in 1974/73 and the first on different horses since Bryan Marshall on Royal Tan & Early Mist in 1954/53 when successful in the world's greatest chase on Pineau De Re (2014) and Many Clouds (2015). He is seeking to be the first jockey ever to ride three successive Grand National winners. **Family:** He is married to Nicola and they have three daughters - Lucy, Niamh and Kitty. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2003 Supreme Glory (2nd); 2004 Skycab (UR 6th); 2005 Take The Stand (UR 15th); 2006 Ballycassidy (FELL 25th), 2007 Billyvoddan (PU 19th); 2011 In Compliance (13th); 2014 PINEAU DE RE (WON), 2015 MANY CLOUDS (WON)**

# Morning Assembly (IRE) 9-10-09

**Breeding:** b g Shantou – Barrack Village (Montelimar)  
**Breeder:** John J Brennan  
**Born:** June 11, 2007  
**Owner:** Clipper Logistics Group Ltd  
**Trainer:** Pat Fahy IRE  
**Jockey:** Davy Russell  
**Form:** 13/21F1/1123/3-224

\*Bred by John Brennan in Co Wexford from a mare who ran once, fourth in a Cork bumper. Changed hands as a four-year-old for just €15,000 at the Tattersalls Ireland August Sale to Gerry Hogan.

\*Will be one of the least experienced in the line-up, having had only 14 runs, of which eight have been over fences. Missed all of the 2014/15 season through injury.

\*After a Grade One win as a novice hurdler, showed high-class form as a novice chaser as he mixed it with the best. Beat Don Cossack in a Grade Two at Punchestown before three Grade One places, a second and third to Carlingford Lough at Leopardstown and Punchestown on either side of his third to O'Faolains Boy and Smad Place in the RSA Chase.

\*This season's comeback has produced three good efforts in defeat, most recently his fourth in the Ultima Handicap Chase at last month's Cheltenham Festival.

**Race record: Starts 14; Wins 5; 2nd 4; 3rd 3. Win & Place Prize Money: £132,135**

## Clipper Logistics Group Ltd

Steve Parkin (born December 12, 1960) is a fashion logistics specialist, and set up Clipper Logistics in Leeds in 1992. Having started life as a miner, Clipper was last estimated to be now worth £263 million. He got into horse racing through his father and grandfather who used to watch it. He currently owns 53 racehorses (of which just six are Jumpers), as well as a private stud farm on 300 acres in North Yorkshire. Clipper Logistics silks are more familiar on the Flat circuit. This is the first runner they have had in the Crabbie's Grand National. Parkin is a passionate Leeds United fan. His biggest win to date, over the Jumps, was in 2013, when Morning Assembly won the Grade One Irish Daily Mirror Novices' Hurdle at Punchestown, while his biggest success on the Flat came with Rosdhu Queen, successful in the Group One Cheveley Park Stakes at Newmarket in 2012. He is married to Joanne and they have four children.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners**

## Pat Fahy (Leighlinbridge, Co Carlow)

**Born:** February 15, 1960 **Background:** A successful showjumper in his teens, Fahy rode his first point-to-point winner at the age of 15. He worked for trainers Tommy O'Brien, Pat Hughes, Tom Kidd and Jim Bolger and rode a few winners, but also took jobs outside racing, including in a meat factory and in the insurance industry. He is married to Nathalie. With the urging of his father-in-law, Wesley Smyth, Fahy started to develop a training yard at Leighlinbridge, Co Carlow. The first winner he trained was Forest Feather at the East Galway point-to-point in May, 1992. Sheer Mist got him off the mark under Rules a month later in a handicap hurdle at Tipperary. He has enjoyed big-race success with the likes of Butches Boy, who took the Grade One 1995 Punchestown Gold Cup. Mariah Rollins was a Grade Two winner over hurdles and a Grade One winner over fences for Fahy, and came third in the Melling Chase at Aintree in 2006. He has a dual-purpose licence, and Ballybacka Lady won the Group Three Derrinstown Stud Irish 1,000 Guineas Trial at Leopardstown in 2011. His best season to date numerically was in 2004-05, when he sent out 30 Jump winners.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 1995 Nuaffe (Fell 20th); 1997 Nuaffe (Fell 11th); 1998 Dun Belle (UR 9th)**

## Davy Russell

**Born:** June 27, 1979 **Background:** Hails - like fellow National Hunt jockey Denis O'Regan - from Youghal in County Cork and progressed from pony racing to become one of Ireland's leading point-to-point riders, winning the championship outright in 2001 and sharing the title with J T McNamara in 2002. His first Aintree success came in 2000 when he rode the Pat Fahy-trained Quadco to win the Champion National Hunt Flat Race at 33/1. The retirement of another one-time Irish point-to-point star, Adrian Maguire, saw him travel over to Britain as stable jockey to Ferdy Murphy and he turned professional on November 12, 2002, with his first success in that sphere coming on Inn Antique at Sedgefield on November 12. He enjoyed his first big success when Truckers Tavern won the 2003 Peter Marsh Chase at Haydock and the same horse went on to be second to Best Mate in the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Russell lost his job as number one jockey to Murphy in January, 2004, after 14 months as he also wanted to continue riding in Ireland at weekends. He returned to Ireland and had a first Cheltenham Festival success in 2006 when Native Jack won the Glenfarclas Cross Country Handicap Chase. Russell won the Irish jockeys' championship in 2011/12 and 2012/13. He was retained jockey to Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary, whose horses run in the maroon and white silks of Gigginstown House Stud, until January 1, 2014. However, he still rides regularly for O'Leary and has enjoyed several high-profile successes for the owner, including eight Cheltenham Festivals victories - Weapon's Amnesty (2009 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle & 2010 RSA Chase), First Lieutenant (2011 Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle), Carlito Brigante (2011 Coral Cup), Sir Des Champs (2012 JLT novices' Chase), Tiger Roll (2014 JCB Triumph Hurdle) and Savello (2014 Grand Annual Handicap Chase). He enjoyed a fantastic treble on the final day of the Cheltenham Festival 2014, winning on aforementioned Tiger Roll and Savello as well as landing the greatest victory of his career when he won the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup on Lord Windermere. Other big race wins at the Cheltenham Festival include the 2015 Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle on Windsor Park and the 2016 Coral Cup on Diamond King. He took the Crabbie's Topham Chase on Cregg House over the Grand National fences in 2005.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2003 Ballinclair King (PU bef 15th); 2004 Takagi (UR 15th); 2005 Arctic Copper (19th); 2006 Joes Edge (7th); 2007 Livingstone Bramble (UR 6th); 2008 Chelsea Harbour (9th); 2009 Hear The Echo (Fell 30th); 2010 Cerium (11th); 2011 Becauseicouldntsee (Fell 2nd); 2012 Alfa Beat (Fell 7th) 2014 Lion Na Bearnai (PU 27th)**

# O'Faolains Boy (FR) 9-11-1

**Breeding:** b g Oscar -Lisa's Storm (Glacial Storm)

**Breeder:** Tom and Pius Phelan

**Born:** June 3, 2007

**Owner:** Trembath, Hyde, Outhart & Hill

**Trainer:** Rebecca Curtis

**Jockey:** Brian Hughes

**Form:** 31114/2P115/P1P87

\*Bred in Co Kilkenny by Tom Phelan and his brother Pius, owner of the Kilford Hotel and O'Faolains nightclub in Kilkenny town.

\*His dam, the six-time winner Lisa's Storm, died giving birth to him and he was reared by a foster mare. His sire Oscar has been responsible for 2011 runner-up Oscar Time and 2013 third Teaforthree.

\*Offered as a foal, when he was led from the ring unsold at €37,000, and again as a five-year-old, when he made £100,000 two weeks after winning a point-to-point.

\*Proved himself a smart novice hurdler (he finished fourth in the Grade One Albert Bartlett Hurdle at Cheltenham) and a better novice chaser, when he beat Many Clouds at Ascot and Smad Place in the Grade 1 RSA Chase at the 2014 Festival.

\*Missed a year through injury and his comeback season has been mixed, with one victory in a two-finisher contest at Newbury his only earnings in five runs.

\*On his latest outing, on his favoured faster ground, he raced with his old zest to take the Gold Cup field along until three out, jumping accurately and boldly. The only fall in his career came on his second point-to-point run.

**Race record: Starts 15; Wins 6; 2nd 1; 3rd 1. Win & Place Prize Money: £142,422.**

## Chris Trembath, Roy Hyde, Tony Outhart and Martin Hill

**Background:** Former Gloucestershire county cricketer player, Chris Trembath (born September 27, 1961) got into racehorse ownership 15 years ago. He owns O'Faolain's Boy with his colleagues who have worked together for the last 20 years in public sector consultancy. After selling their businesses, they decided to buy a horse together. O'Faolains Boy is the sixth horse in this syndicate and has been their most successful, after winning the RSA Cheltenham Festival in 2014. Chris Trembath, who runs the various syndicates, had the greatest interest and 'persuaded the others into it.' After a chance meeting with Rebecca Curtis and her partner Gearoid Costelloe at a bed and breakfast in Cheltenham, when Curtis was just starting out. Costelloe tipped two horses and Trembath promised if they won he would buy a horse with him and Curtis. After both tips won, he purchased Peckamecho and since then Trembath and different colleagues have had about 20 horses with Curtis over the past five years and have about 12 in training with her now. Hill, Trembath and Outhart also owned Naiad du Misselot with Ferdy Murphy, who won the 2008 Coral Cup at the Cheltenham Festival. The 54-year-old lives in and works in Bristol. He is married to Amanda and has three children. Martin Hill lives in Taunton and Roy Hyde lives in Doncaster. Tony Outhart (born September 17, 1963) is a former Scarborough FC player. Outhart started owning racehorses in 2001, with his friend Chris Trembath, who met through their work in the public sector. He and the syndicate have all their horses in training with Rebecca Curtis. Outhart lives in Scarborough with his wife Gill and their three children.

## No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

## Rebecca Curtis (Newport, Pembrokeshire)

Curtis, who was born on April 1, 1980, grew up on Fforest Farm five miles from Fishguard on the Pembrokeshire coast, a place that has now become her training centre. She has been around horses all her life and started riding aged four, progressing to showjump for the Welsh junior team. She rode in point-to-points and her first job in racing was with nearby trainer Peter Bowen. She spent five years in America with trainers Richard Mandela and Dan Hendricks before coming home to take out a licence in 2008. Her first winner was Mango Catcher at Chepstow on April 5 that year and her reputation has steadily grown in the intervening years. She enjoyed a first Cheltenham Festival winner in 2012 when Teaforthree won the National Hunt Chase and a second when At Fishers Cross took the 2013 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle to give her a first Grade One victory, swiftly followed by a second at Aintree in the Doom Bar Sefton Novices' Hurdle. She has enjoyed four winners at the Cheltenham Festival in all and had a tremendous first experience of the Crabbie's Grand National, with Teaforthree finishing third in 2013. Curtis is assisted by her partner, bloodstock agent Gearoid Costelloe, and she uses her family's private beach to exercise her horses. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2013 Teaforthree (3rd); 2014 Teaforthree (UR 15th); 2015 Bob Ford (PU 29th)**

## Brian Hughes

**Born:** June 27, 1985 **Background:** Raised in South Armagh. Started out in his native Ireland riding as a Flat apprentice. Having graduated from the Racing Academy and Centre of Education in Kildare in 2002, rode for trainer Kevin Prendergast who provided him with his first winner when Perugino Lady won an apprentice handicap at Downpatrick on October 9, 2002. After three seasons and 19 wins on the Flat, rising weight prompted a full-time switch to Jump racing. He was connected to the James Lambe stable for the 2004/05 season but relocated to Britain and the County Durham yard of Howard Johnson for the 2005/06 campaign. His career flourished after becoming stable jockey at Alan Swinbank's North Yorkshire yard, a move that saw him crowned champion conditional at the end of the 2007/08 season with 39 wins on the board, most of them for Swinbank and County Durham permit holder John Wade. Has an enviable record over the Grand National fences, having partnered Always Waining to success in the 2010 Crabbie's Topham Chase and Frankie Figg to victory in the Betfred Grand Sefton Chase in November of the same year. He recorded a first Cheltenham Festival win in 2014 on board the Tim Easterby-trained Hawk High in the Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle, and took the Close Brothers Novices' Handicap Chase with the Ian Williams-trained Ballyalton at the 2016 Festival.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2010 Beat The Boys (PU 19th); 2011 Tidal Bay (UR 10th); 2012 Viking Blond (FELL 1st); 2014 Vintage Star (PU 26th); 2015 Ely Brown (FELL 1st)**

# Onenightinvienna (IRE) 7-10-08

**Breeding:** b g Oscar (IRE) - Be My Granny (Needle Gun (IRE))

**Breeder:** Colm Griffin

**Born:** April 13, 2009

**Owner:** Judith Luff

**Trainer:** Philip Hobbs

**Jockey:** Tom O'Brien

**Jump Form:** 3213/211-1225

\*Novice who is bidding to become the first seven-year-old to win the Crabbie's Grand National since Bogskar in 1940.

\*Scored decisively on chasing debut in a three-mile novices' chase at Exeter in November, 2015.

\*Runner-up on next two starts in similar contests, including when going down by two and a quarter lengths to subsequent RSA Chase hero Blaklion at Cheltenham in December.

\*Disappointed when fifth of six in Grade Two Reynoldstown Novices' Chase at Ascot on February 20.

\*Runs in the same colours as 1986 Crabbie's Grand National hero West Tip. Judith inherited the colours from her late husband Peter.

**Jump race record: Starts: 11; Wins: 4; 2nd: 4; 3rd: 2; Win & Place Prize Money: £33,866**

## Judith Luff

Widow of Grand National-winning owner Peter Luff, a Wokingham-based property developer who passed away in September, 2014 after a short illness aged 78. Peter's light blue colours were made famous by West Tip. Trained by Michael Oliver, West Tip ran in six Grand Nationals, falling at second Becher's Brook when in the lead in 1985 before returning to win the race 12 months later. He was also second in 1989 and fourth twice.

## No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

## Philip Hobbs (Bilbrook, Somerset)

**Born** July 26, 1955 **Background:** Philip was brought up surrounded by horses. His father Tony Hobbs farmed, and had a permit to train for many years, breeding several good horses to run in the family colours. After school at King's College, Taunton, Philip went on to Reading University and achieved a BSc honours degree. He rode at Hickstead, show jumping as a junior, and gained several point-to-point winners and winners under National Hunt rules as an amateur before turning professional at the age of 21. Partnered 160 winners in a 10-year riding career including the Black and White Gold Cup at Ascot, the Killiney Novice Chase and the Midlands Grand National on such good horses as West Tip and Artifice. Hobbs made four appearances in the Grand National as a professional jockey in the 1980s and, although one of the best horses he rode was West Tip, he didn't get the leg up on him in the National, with those four rides resulting in two falls, one ninth place and an 11th. He started training in August, 1985, with only six horses and was successful with his very first runner, North Yard at Exeter. He is now one of Britain's top Jump trainers and has gone close to winning the Crabbie's Grand National with What's Up Boys, second in 2002, Balthazar King, runner-up in 2014 and Samlee, third in 1998. Philip's wife Sarah, whom he married in 1982, is the daughter of Bertie Hill, who won a gold medal in three-day eventing at the 1956 Olympics at Stockholm. They have three daughters, Caroline, Katherine and Diana.

**Achievements:** has trained over 2,000 winners, including 18 at the Cheltenham Festival. **Major Wins include:** Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (2002 Flagship Uberalles), Stan James Champion Hurdle (2003 Rooster Booster), Racing Post Arkle Chase (2011 Captain Chris). **Aintree:** He has been leading trainer at the Grand National Festival at least three times – 2006, 2001 and 2000. His big wins at Aintree include G1 Manifesto Novice's Chase (2012 Menorah), G1 Anniversary 4-YO Juvenile Hurdle (2000 Lord Brex, 2006 Detroit City), G1 Mildmay Novices' Chase (2001 What's Up Boys). **Crabbie's Grand National record: 1990 Gallic Prince (13th); Joint Sovereignty (FELL 19th); 1995 Gold Cap (13th); 1998 Samlee (3rd); Greenhill Tare Away (UR 27th); 1999 Samlee (10th); Bells Life (PU 26th); Mudahim (UR 6th); 2000 Village King (FELL 20th); Stormy Passage (Fell 22nd); 2001 Village King (FELL 8th); 2002 What's Up Boys (2nd); 2004 What's Up Boys (BD 6th); 2005 Double Honour (UR 21st); 2007 Zabenz (PU 7th), Monkerhostin (REF 7th); 2009 Zabenz (FELL 16th), Parsons Legacy (FELL 22nd); 2010 Dream Alliance (PU 24th); 2011 Quinz (PU 16th); 2012 Planet Of Sound (12th); 2013 Balthazar King (15th); 2014 Balthazar King (2nd), Chance Du Roy (6th); 2015 Chance Du Roy (10th), Gas Line Boy (FELL 1st), Balthazar King (FELL 8th)**

## Tom O'Brien

**Born:** November 28, 1986 **Background:** set a record for the conditional riders' championship in the 2006/07 season with 107 successes. His father Jim is a brother of the brilliant trainer Aidan O'Brien and plays a key role at his Ballydoyle stable in Co Tipperary. From the age of 13, Tom rode out at weekends and in school holidays at Ballydoyle, aboard champions such as High Chaparral, Rock Of Gibraltar and Mozart. He joined Philip Hobbs's stable as a 17-year-old, initially riding as an amateur and in point-to-points and had his first success aboard The Names Bond at Warwick on December 18, 2004. O'Brien also has an association with trainer Peter Bowen, for whom he finished second aboard McKelvey when having his first Crabbie's Grand National ride in 2007. He landed the Coral Welsh National in 2009 on Dream Alliance and has enjoyed one success at the Cheltenham Festival – Silk Affair in the 2009 Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle. Aidan O'Brien still takes a keen interest in his nephew's progress - "when he sits down to watch me ride, he often gets on the phone to give me a rollicking," said Tom. He partnered the Peter Bowen-trained Always Waining to two of his record-breaking three successes over the Grand National fences in the Crabbie's Topham Chase at Aintree and also won the 2013 Betfred Becher Chase on the Hobbs-trained Chance Du Roy.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 McKelvey (2nd); 2008 McKelvey (UR 20th); 2009 Zabenz (Fell 16th); 2010 Dream Alliance (PU Bef 24th); 2013 Always Waining (10th); 2014 Chance Du Roy (6th); 2015 Chance Du Roy (10th)**

## On His Own (IRE) 12-11-01

**Breeding:** b g Presenting — Shuil Na Mhuire (IRE) (Roselier (FR))

**Breeder:** Margaret Treacy

**Born:** July 10, 2004

**Owner:** Andrea & Graham Wylie

**Trainer:** Willie Mullins IRE

**Jockey:** Mr Patrick Mullins

**Jump Form:** 10/414P1/B1F/1F5/1766112/862651-P797U4828

\*Fell in both the 2012 and 2013 runnings of the Crabbie's Grand National, but has completed over the National fences when sixth in the 2013 Betfred Becher Chase.

\*Went down by a short-head to Lord Windermere in the 2014 Cheltenham Gold Cup.

\*Dual winner of the Grade A Thyestes Chase at Gowran Park, scoring impressively in 2012 and 2014.

\*Touched off by stablemate Boston Bob in Grade Two Bobbyjo Chase at Fairyhouse on Feb 20.

\*Well-beaten eighth behind Don Cossack in the Cheltenham Gold Cup on March 18.

\*Cost £240,000 in January, 2010 after winning a point-to-point and bumper in Ireland.

**Jump race record: Starts: 35; Wins: 9; 2nd: 3; 3rd: -; Win & Place Prize Money: £378,503**

### Andrea & Graham Wylie

**Background:** Multi-millionaire Graham Wylie made his money in the computer software industry. He is the son of Scottish parents - his father was a coalminer from Stirling and his mother a seamstress from Hawick, where Wylie was born in 1959. After graduating from Newcastle University in 1980 with a degree in computer science and statistics, founded Sage in 1981 with David Goldman, Phil Lever and Paul Muller, selling accountancy software. The company floated on the stock exchange in 1989. After stepping down as managing director of Sage in May, 2003, Wylie sold a number of his shares and gained over £120 million. A huge Newcastle United fan, he married his second wife Andrea Stone at Slaley Hall, Northumberland in May, 2003 - the event was described as the "north-east's wedding of the decade," and was attended by over 250 guests, including Alan Shearer and Sir Bobby Robson. Pop superstar Ronan Keating performed at the couple's wedding (for a reputed £175,000), singing When You Say Nothing At All, from the 1999 film Notting Hill, which the couple saw on their first date. Graham Wylie founded a new company, Technology Services Group (TSG), in 2003. He owns Close House Country Club and golf course, and Gosforth Shopping Centre, and was awarded a CBE for his services to industry in the 2004 New Year's Honours list. Graham's contribution to the North East region has been acknowledged by the award of honorary doctorates by both the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and Northumbrian University, and the freedom of the city of Newcastle. The Sunday Times Rich List in 2015 estimated he is worth £185 million. The Wylies live close to Hexham in Northumberland and Andrea has also excelled at showing dogs ([www.transcendshowdogs.com](http://www.transcendshowdogs.com)), another interest they share, winning the best of breed prize at Crufts 2013 with her Maltese dog Hi-Lite Come Dance With Me. The couple's twin daughters Kiera and Zahra were born in December, 2009. Kiera was born with a defective heart, which has led the Wylies to fund raise for the heart unit at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital among other charitable endeavours. **Racing Interests:** Their first horse Lord Transcend, named after Andrea's hair and beauty salon in Hexham, won at 33/1 on his debut at Newcastle in March, 2002, and went on to prove himself a high-class horse over hurdles and fences, winning six times in all, before a leg injury sustained at Haydock in January, 2006, cut short his racing career. Having caught the 'racing bug' through the success of Lord Transcend, Graham and Andrea Wylie invested millions of pounds and built up a large string in training with Howard Johnson. At Doncaster's 2003 May Sale, Graham Wylie set a then record for a Jump horse when paying 340,000 guineas for Royal Rosa, which was a wedding present for his wife. Howard Johnson was banned from racing for four years in August 2011, and as a result, the Wylies reduced their 60-strong string by half and sent 12 to British Jump champion Paul Nicholls and seven to Irish Jump champion Willie Mullins. Has seen his colours carried to victory at the Cheltenham Festival on 11 occasions, including three in 2016 (Yorkhill, Black Hercules and Solar Impulse). Their star has been three-time World Hurdle victor Inglis Drever. The Wylies bred the Listed bumper winner Augusta Kate at their Chesters Stud. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Bewleys Berry (Fell 22nd); 2008 Bewleys Berry (5th), Backbeat (Fell 2nd); 2010 Royal Rosa (UR 14th); 2011 Tidal Bay (UR 10th); 2012 On His Own (leased for the day) (Fell 22nd); 2013 On His Own (Fell 25th); 2014 Prince De Beauchene (16th)**

## **Willie Mullins IRE (Bagenalstown, County Carlow)**

**Born** September 15, 1956 **Background:** A six-time champion amateur rider in Ireland, his successes in the saddle included the 1983 Fox Hunters' Chase at Aintree on Atha Cliath (among the also-rans were Robert Waley-Cohen, chairman of Cheltenham Racecourse, and former Aintree Racecourse chairman Lord Daresbury). As a jockey in the Crabbie's Grand National, his rides included The Ladys Master, who ran out in 1983, and Hazy Dawn, who fell at the sixth the following year. He hails from one of Ireland's most famous racing families, being a son of the late Paddy Mullins, the outstanding all-round trainer whose most dazzling star was Dawn Run, winner of the 1984 Champion Hurdle and 1986 Cheltenham Gold Cup. **Training Achievements:** Mullins, who took out a training licence in 1988, has been Ireland's champion trainer 10 times, and will win an 11th title this season (and ninth in a row). He has won most of the major prizes in Britain and Ireland, and several in France as well. He has 48 Cheltenham Festival successes to his credit, including Champion Hurdles with Annie Power, Faugheen, Hurricane Fly, and an extraordinary eight in the Champion Bumper, starting with Wither Or Which (which he also rode) in 1996. He has been leading trainer at The Festival for five of the last six years (seven winners this year and a record eight in 2015) and lies second on the all-time list of most successful trainers behind Nicky Henderson. Mullins' star performer in the early part of the century was Florida Pearl, who was placed in two Cheltenham Gold Cups, won the 1998 RSA Chase, the 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2004 Irish Gold Cups in Ireland as well as the 2001 King George VI Chase and the 2002 Betfred Bowl at Aintree. The brilliant Hurricane Fly won the Stan James Champion Hurdle in 2011 and 2013 and Mullins' Cheltenham Festival winners include the amazing Quevega who created history by becoming the only horse to win the same race in six consecutive years (the OLBG Mares' Hurdle). Mullins has over 230 horses at his Closutton yard near Bagenalstown in Co Carlow, with many of his current stable superstars such as Faugheen, Annie Power, Douvan and Vautour owned by Rich and Susannah Ricci. His first Grand National runner as a trainer, Micko's Dream, fell at the first in 2000. Mullins, a former chairman of the Irish Trainers' Federation, also suffered disappointment in 2004 when Hedgehunter departed at the final fence in the Crabbie's Grand National when looking assured of a place. He overcame bad luck the following year when Hedgehunter came home 14 lengths clear of Royal Auclair and finished second in 2006. Mullins is set to have more runners than usual during the Crabbie's Grand National Festival as he goes for his first British Jump trainers' championship. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2000 Micko's Dream (FELL 1st); 2002 Alexander Banquet (UR 6th); 2004 Alexander Banquet (FELL 18th), Hedgehunter (FELL 30th); 2005 HEDGEHUNTER (WON); 2006 Hedgehunter (2nd); 2007 Hedgehunter (9th), Homer Wells (PU 22nd), Bothar Na (PU 29th), Livingstonebramble (UR 6th); 2008 Snowy Morning (3rd), Hedgehunter (13th); 2009 Snowy Morning (9th), Irish Invader (11th); 2010 Snowy Morning (6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th); 2011 The Midnight Club (6th), Dooney's Gate (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 The Midnight Club (11th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th), On His Own (FELL 22nd); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Quel Esprit (PU 24th), On His Own (FELL 25th); 2014 Vesper Bell (13th), Prince De Beauchene (16th); 2015 Ballycasey (UR 8th)**

## **Mr Patrick Mullins**

Patrick Mullins, born December 5, 1989, is the son of former top amateur rider, now Ireland's champion Jump trainer, Willie Mullins, and his wife Jackie, herself a former top lady amateur. He is a nephew of successful National Hunt trainers Tony and Tom Mullins, and a grandson of one of the all-time great National Hunt trainers, the late Paddy Mullins. His cousin Emmet is a professional jockey. The amateur took his first ride in public on his father's Screaming Witness in a bumper at Thurles in December, 2005, and the first winner came at the age of 16 on a horse of his father's called Diego Garcia in a qualified riders race at Limerick the following June. Understandably, at that time his riding was restricted by him having to attend school, but he increasingly managed to turn up on the racetrack to take fancied rides. He won the long-established Denny Havasnack amateur riders' race at Tralee on August 31, 2006, when still 16 and his first Cheltenham Festival victory came aboard Cousin Vinny, also trained by his father, in the Weatherbys Champion Bumper on March 13, 2008. He partnered the same horse to success in the Paddy Power Champion INH Flat Race at Punchestown in 2008. He has had three winners at the Cheltenham Festival in all and enjoyed Grade One successes on Douvan and Champagne Fever among others. He broke the record for the number of wins by an amateur rider in a calendar year in 2012, eclipsing Billy Parkinson's total of 72 set in 1915 by two. He has been champion Irish Jump amateur rider for eight seasons (his best season was 68 winners in 2012/13) and is heading for his ninth title in the 2015/16 season. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2011 Dooneys Gate FELL (11th)**

## Pendra (IRE) 8-10-5

**Breeding:** ch g Old Vic – Mariah Rollins (Over The River)

**Breeder:** Paul Murphy

**Born:** April 16, 2008

**Owner:** JP McManus

**Trainer:** Charlie Longsdon

**Jockey:** Aidan Coleman

**Form:** 1/1120/11730/45-15

\*Bred by Staffordshire-based Paul Murphy, who acquired his dam towards the end of her racing career for 140,000gns. She was a high-class jumper, with a Grade 1 chase victory at Leopardstown to her credit, and a third place in the Grade 1 Melling Chase at Aintree.

\*His sire Old Vic has an outstanding Grand National record, with winners Comply Or Die and Don't Push It (both also placed) and two runners-up in Black Apalachi and Sunnyhillboy.

\*He was bought privately by his present owner after ran second in the Grade One Tolworth Hurdle in January, 2013 Was unplaced, as favourite, in the Coral Cup at Cheltenham on his first run in the new colours.

\*Won his first two starts over fences but has been lightly-raced since, with just six starts in the past two years.

\*Scored his latest win at Ascot in October, when he beat Double Ross in a valuable three-mile handicap and finished fifth over the same course and distance in December, his latest run.

**Race record: Starts 14; Wins 6; 2nd 1; 3rd 1. Win & Place Prize Money: £94,926**

### J P McManus

**Born:** March 10, 1951 in Co Limerick, Ireland. **Background:** John Patrick 'J P' McManus attended the Christian Brothers school on Sexton Street, Limerick. He left his father's plant hire business at the age of 20 to become a racecourse bookmaker, but then took the less well-trodden route of gamekeeper-turned-poacher when becoming a professional punter. McManus recalls one of his first bets as being on Merryman II in the 1960 Grand National when he was just nine, but the bet that changed his life was £4 on Linden Tree in a Newmarket maiden in 1970, the horse winning at 100/8. He had another £4 on when Linden Tree won the Observer Gold Cup at 25/1, and £5 each-way at 33/1 for the Derby, when the horse beat all bar Mill Reef. He was dubbed "the Sundance Kid" by journalist Hugh McIlvanney after landing a number of major gambles during the 1970s. McManus has a host of business interests including dealing on the financial markets from his Geneva, Switzerland, base and part-ownership of the Sandy Lane Hotel in Barbados, where he also has a house. With John Magnier, he bought a 28.7% stake in Manchester United through the Cubic Expression company before subsequently selling out to US tycoon Malcolm Glazer in 2005. He was in the news shortly after that because of his stake in the pub and restaurant operator Mitchells and Butler. In 2015, the Sunday Times estimated McManus' wealth at £586 million, making him the 16th richest person in Ireland. **Racing interests:** McManus purchased his first racehorse, Cill Dara, at the age of 26 and is the biggest jump owner in terms of numbers in Britain and Ireland, with some 400 horses in training. He owns Jackdaws Castle, the Gloucestershire yard that Jonjo O'Neill trains from, and has invested heavily in improving facilities since purchasing the property in 2001. Mister Donovan provided him with his first Cheltenham Festival success in the 1982 Supreme Novices' Hurdle and McManus has enjoyed 48 winners in total at the meeting - far more than any other owner. The mighty Istabraq is the most revered horse he has owned following three consecutive victories in the Champion Hurdle (1998, 1999, 2000), while he has also won a Cheltenham Gold Cup with Synchronised (2012) and three World Hurdles with Baracouda (2002 & 2003) and More Of That (2014). A full 28 years after his first runner in the race, McManus finally achieved a long-held ambition when Don't Push It, trained by Jonjo O'Neill and ridden by A P McCoy, won the 2010 Crabbie's Grand National. He has been British champion owner for the 2005/6, 2006/7, 2008/9, 2009/10, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 & 2014/15 seasons. He retained A P McCoy as his main jockey from April, 2004 until the rider's retirement in April 2015. Barry Geraghty has taken over that position, with McCoy having an advisory role. Frank Berry is the McManus racing manager. **Other interests:** McManus does a lot of work for charity and his Pro-Am golf tournament, which takes place every five years, has raised over 100 million euros. McManus is also a keen backgammon player and a big hurling fan. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1982 Deep Gale (FELL 1st); 1988 Bucko (PU 27th); 1992 Laura's Beau (3rd); 1994 Laura's Beau (FELL 6th); 1996 Wylde Hide (UR 24th); 1997 Wylde Hide (UR 22nd); 1998 Gimme Five (5th); 2002 Spot Thedifference (UR 27th); 2003 Youlneverwalkalone (PU 13th); 2004 Clan Royal (2nd), Spot Thedifference (5th), Risk Accessor (UR 6th), Le Coudray (FELL 22nd); 2005 Innox (7th), Spot Thedifference (18th), Shamawan (21st), Clan Royal (CO 22nd), Le Coudray (PU 21st), Risk Accessor (UR 2nd); 2006 Clan Royal (3rd), Risk Accessor (5th), Innox (FELL 1st), First Gold (UR 23rd); 2007 L'Ami (10th), Clan Royal (11th); 2008 King Johns Castle (2nd),**

**L'Ami (FELL 2nd), Bob Hall (PU 19th), Butler's Cabin (FELL 22nd); 2009 Butler's Cabin (7th), Reveillez (BD 3rd), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), L'Ami (PU 30th); 2010 DON'T PUSH IT (WON), Can't Buy Time (FELL 8th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th), King Johns Castle (refused to race); 2011 Don't Push It (3rd), Blue Sea Cracker (14th), Quolibet (UR 11th), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 Sunnyhillboy (2nd), Synchronised (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 10th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Colbert Station (UR 15th), Lost Glory (PU 17th), Sunnyhillboy (UR last); 2014 Double Seven (3rd), Colbert Station (PU 25th); 2015 Shutthefrontdoor (5th), Cause Of Causes (8th), Wyck Hill (PU 29th)**

#### **Charlie Longsdon (Hull Farm, Chipping Norton)**

**Born:** October 8, 1975. **Background:** Grew up in the world of eventing, competing up to intermediate level. He had the ambition to train from an early age and gained work experience with Oliver Sherwood and Nigel Twiston-Davies. While at university (he studied Art at Oxford Brookes), Longsdon spent the summer working on a game reserve in Kenya. After university, he worked at Kim Bailey's yard in Lambourn as his assistant. In 2001, Longsdon joined Nicky Henderson at Seven Barrows and, during his five years with Henderson, won the Alex Scott Memorial Fund Assistant Trainer's Scholarship (2004), which gave him a sabbatical in the United States, where he worked with champion Flat trainer Todd Pletcher. When he got his licence, Longsdon based himself at Sezincote, near Moreton-on-the-Marsh and in his first season, 2006/07, trained nine winners. In 2009, Longsdon moved to Hull Farm near Chipping Norton on the Oxfordshire/Gloucester border and from there posted a seasonal best of 78 winners in 2013/14. His achievements include four Graded victories, most recently Kilcooley in the National Spirit Hurdle at Fontwell in February. Married to Sophie and they have three children.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 2010 Palypso De Creek (Fell 27th); 2015 Ely Brown (Fell 1st)**

#### **Aidan Coleman**

Born on August 17, 1988, and brought up in Cork, where his parents are teachers, Aidan Coleman learned his trade on the Irish pony racing circuit, where he had over 100 winners as a teenager. He followed his brother Kevin as a jockey, but in England, not Ireland, joining Henrietta Knight, for whom he had his first ride under rules on Silverbar in December 2006. At the end of the 2006/07 season, Coleman moved to Venetia Williams' stable at King's Caple and his first winner arrived in the shape of Tashkandi, who was successful in a selling hurdle at Uttoxeter in October, 2007. That victory put him on the fast track to success. In 2009, he partnered a Cheltenham Festival winner when Kayf Aramis won the Pertemps Network Final. Coleman won on his first ride at Aintree as he partnered Stan to capture the Red Rum Handicap Chase and he rode the same horse in the following year's Grand National, thus famously missing out on the winning ride on 100/1 winning stablemate Mom Mome. Coleman rode Stewarts House to success in the Betfred Grand Sefton Handicap Chase in over the Grand National fences in December, 2011. This season he has ridden as first jockey to trainer John Ferguson and is enjoying by far his most successful campaign, with 125 winners as of April 6. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2008 Mon Mome (10th); 2009 Stan (FELL 7th); 2010 Mon Mome (FELL 26th); 2011 Grand Slam Hero (FELL 13th); 2012 Mon Mome (PU 22nd); 2013 The Rainbow Hunter (UR 8th); 2014 The Rainbow Hunter (UR 9th); 2015 The Druid's Nephew (FELL 26th)**

## Rocky Creek (IRE) 10-10-13

**Breeding:** b g Dr Massini (IRE) - Kissantell (IRE) (Broken Hearted)

**Breeder:** Colm Griffin

**Born:** March 28, 2006

**Owner:** The Johnson & Stewart Families

**Trainer:** Paul Nicholls

**Jockey:** Andrew Thornton

**Form:** 218/21113/225/2P10P-2P40

\*Fifth in 2014 Crabbie's Grand National and 17th in 2015.

\*Recorded biggest victory in Grade Three BetBright Chase over three miles at Kempton Park in February, 2014.

\*Began this season brightly when chasing home subsequent Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup hero Don Cossack in Grade One JNWine.com Champion Chase at Down Royal on October 31 but very disappointing since, most recently finishing 10th in BetBright Chase at Kempton Park on February 27, when wearing first-time blinkers.

**Jump race Record: Starts: 20; Wins: 5; 2nd: 6; 3rd: 1; Win & Place Prize Money: £247,938**

### The Stewart Family

The Stewart Family comprises husband and wife Andy and Judy Stewart, and their two sons, Mark and Paul. The latter broke his back in a snowboarding accident in December, 2008, but has made tremendous progress to walk again and the family have sponsored several races at Cheltenham, including the Supreme Novices' Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival and the December Gold Cup for the benefit of Spinal Research. Andy Stewart, born on August 15, 1951 in Romford to parents who were both doctors, went to Felsted School in Essex and bunked off to go point-to-pointing at Marks Tey. He also hitchhiked to Liverpool to attend the Grand National Festival. He began work aged 17 in the fixed-interest department of Simon & Coates, eventually becoming a senior partner at that stockbroking firm. He became chief executive of Chase Manhattan Securities when it took over Simon & Coates. Stewart co-founded broker Collins Stewart in 1991 and was executive deputy chairman when it floated on the Stock Exchange worth £326 million in 2000 before leaving the business in 2003. He then founded Cenkos Securities, named after his first top-class racehorse, but stepped down in 2010. Cenkos won 15 races and over £500,000 in prize money and was twice third in the Queen Mother Champion Chase at the Cheltenham Festival. Stewart is now chairman of Ravenscroft Limited (formerly Cenkos Channel Islands) which has offices in Guernsey and Jersey. He is also a major shareholder in the CHAPS Restaurants, Barbados, where he has a home. **Racing interests:** Andy was first involved with ownership in 1986 and the family enjoyed the first of six Cheltenham Festival successes when Celestial Halo won the JCB Triumph Hurdle in 2008. Outstanding staying hurdler Big Buck's became the first horse to win four renewals of the Ladbrokes World Hurdle in 2012 and broke Sir Ken's record by winning his 17th consecutive race over jumps in the Liverpool Hurdle at the 2012 Grand National Festival. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Le Duc (UR 6th); 2008 Turko (Fell 25th); 2009 My Will (3rd); 2010 My Will (Fell 4th); 2011 Ornaïs (Fell 4th); 2012 Tatenen (UR 8th); 2013 Tatenen (Fell 12th); 2014 Rocky Creek (5th), 2015 Rocky Creek (17th)**

### The Johnson Family

Horses owned by the late David Johnson continue to run in his famous blue and green silks under The Johnson Family following his death from cancer on July 6, 2013. David was a self-made businessman and is survived by his wife Shirley, whom he married in 1968, and two children - Stephen and Lisa. A docker's son, born in 1944, from the East End of London, he began working at the Midland Bank in East Ham for £9 a week aged 16. He subsequently built up some very successful mortgage companies and established himself as one of the most innovative figures in the sector. **Racing interests:** David formed a formidable partnership with Martin Pipe (now retired) and then his son David. He enjoyed 13 winners at Cheltenham Festival, headlined by four successes in the Racing Post Arkle Chase (1997 Or Royal, 1998 Champlève, 2004 Well Chief & 2005 Contraband) and Our Vic's front-running success in the 2008 Ryanair Chase. Johnson captured a first owners' championship in 1997/98 and took the title again in 2001/2, 2002/3, 2003/4 and 2004/5. Comply Or Die's victory in the 2008 Grand National helped Johnson secure a sixth leading owners' title, with over £1.4 million in prize money for that 2007/8 season. **Crabbie's Grand National Record (David Johnson): 1998 Challenger Du Luc (Fell 1st); 1999 Eudipe (Fell 22nd), Tamarindo (Fell 6th); 2002 Iris Bleu (Fell 5th); 2003 Iris Bleu (PU bef 16th); 2004 Lord Atterbury (3rd), Jurancon II (Fell 4th), Montreal (Fell 6th); 2005 It Takes Time (4th), Lord Atterbury (Fell 1st); 2006 Therealbandit (PU 27th), It Takes Time (PU 29th); 2007 Celtic Son (PU 22nd); 2008 COMPLY OR DIE (WON), Vodka Bleu (PU 19th); 2009 Comply Or Die (2nd); 2010 Comply Or Die (12th), The Package (UR 19th); 2011 Comply Or Die (PU 29th); 2012 Swing Bill (10th); 2013 Swing Bill (6th); 2014 (The Johnson Family) Rocky Creek (8th), The Package (12th), Our Father (UR 8th); 2015 Rocky Creek (17th)**

**Paul Nicholls (Manor Farm Stables, Ditcheat, Shepton Mallet, Somerset)**

**Born:** April 17, 1962 at Lydney, Gloucestershire **Background:** The son of a policeman, he grew up in Olveston. Started out in point-to-points after leaving school at 16 and worked for a couple of yards before becoming a conditional jockey with Josh Gifford for two years and then joining Devon trainer David Barons. He partnered 119 winners between 1980 and 1989, with his biggest British successes coming in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury on Broadheath (1986) and Playschool (1987). He struggled to keep his weight down and gave up race riding. Between 1989 and 1991, he was assistant trainer to Barons, who trained Broadheath and Playschool and sent out Seagram to win the 1991 Grand National. Has been training at Manor Farm Stables in Ditcheat, Somerset, since taking out a licence on November 1, 1991. Started out with eight horses. The facilities have kept on being improved. His daughter Megan is an apprentice jockey with trainer Richard Hannon. **Achievements:** Nine-time champion Jump trainer (2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2013/14, 2014/15) and became the first handler to accrue more than £4 million in a season in 2007/08. He gained his 2,000th winner at Down Royal on November 5, 2011, less than 20 years after taking his licence, making him the fastest Jump trainer to reach the landmark figure. Has sent out 40 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and is the joint-third most successful trainer there. His successes there include four victories or more in three of the meeting's showpiece contests - the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (1999 Call Equiname, 2004 Azertyuiop, 2008 & 2009 Master Minded, 2015 Dodging Bullets), the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup (1999 See More Business, 2007 & 2009 Kauto Star, 2008 Denman) and the Ryanair World Hurdle (Big Buck's 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012). He also won the Stan James Champion Hurdle with Rock On Ruby in 2012. At Aintree, he captured the Crabbie's Grand National with Neptune Collonges in 2012 and sent out Big Buck's for four consecutive victories (2009 to 2012) in the race which is now the Grade One Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle. He saddled Silviniaco Conti to win the Grade One Betfred Bowl in 2014 and 2015. He has been leading trainer at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival three times - in 2008, 2011 & 2015.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1992 Just So (6th); 1996 Vicompt De Valmont (10th), Deep Bramble (PU 29th), Brackenfield (UR 19th); 1997 Straight Talk (FELL 14th); 1998 What A Hand (FELL 1st), Court Melody (FELL 6th), General Crack (PU 11th); 1999 Strong Chairman (15th), Double Thriller (FELL 1st); 2000 Earthmover (FELL 4th), Torduff Express (FELL 13th), Flaked Oats (FELL 20th), Escartefigue (UR 30th); 2001 Earthmover (FELL 4th); 2002 Murt's Man (PU 17th), Ad Hoc (BD 27th); 2003 Montifault (5th), Fadalko (UR 6th), Ad Hoc (UR 19th), Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd), Torduff Express (UR 27th); 2004 Exit To Wave (PU 9th); 2005 Royal Auclair (2nd), Heros Collonges (8th), L'Aventure (15th), Ad Hoc (FELL 22nd); 2006 Royal Auclair (FELL 1st), Le Duc (UR 8th), Silver Birch (FELL 15th), Heros Collonges (UR 15th), Le Roi Miguel (PU 19th), Cornish Rebel (PU 19th); 2007 Le Duc (UR 6th), Royal Auclair (FELL 9th), Eurotrek (PU bef 22nd), Thisthatandtother (PU 30th); 2008 Cornish Sett (12th), Turko (FELL 25th), Mr Pointment (PU 30th); 2009 My Will (3rd), Big Fella Thanks (6th), Cornish Sett (17th), Eurotrek (PU 17th); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th), Tricky Trickster (9th), My Will (FELL 4th), Nozic (UR 20th); 2011 Niche Market (5th), Ornaïs (FELL 4th), The Tother One (FELL 6th), What A Friend (PU 27th); 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2013 Join Together (12th), What A Friend (PU 19th), Harry The Viking (PU 26th); 2014 Rocky Creek (5th), Hawkes Point (18th), Tidal Bay (UR 8th); 2015 Mon Parrain (11th), Rocky Creek (17th), Rebel Rebellion (PU 26th), Unioniste (FELL 5th)**

**Andrew Thornton**

**Born:** October 28, 1972, in Stockton-On-Tees, Cleveland **Background:** Andrew Thornton began his riding career as an amateur for the late, great County Durham trainer Arthur Stephenson and his first winner came for the handler aboard Wrekin Hill at Sedgefield on November 23, 1991. Thornton attended Barnard Castle School where he was a promising rugby player but abandoned dreams of Twickenham to pursue the amateur riders' title, which he took in the 1992/93 season with 28 wins from 146 rides. He enjoyed a phenomenal 1997/98 season, picking up a spare ride on See More Business to win the King George VI Chase when regular partner Timmy Murphy was sidelined through suspension and then landed the Cheltenham Gold Cup on 25/1 outsider Cool Dawn trained by Robert Alner. Based in Lambourn, Thornton is a renowned horseman, a fact highlighted by his remarkable handling of Kingscliff in the coral.co.uk Handicap Chase at Ascot in November 2003. The left rein snapped at the third fence and the gelding was lucky not to break through the running rail, but an undaunted Thornton expertly guided his charge over a further 17 fences for a front-running victory that was declared the ride of the season. His big-race wins include the Racing Post Chase in 2007 aboard Simon, while he has also been associated with the brilliant hurdler French Holly, The Listener, Super Tactics, Sir Rembrandt and Gingembre, on whom he won the Scottish Grand National and Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup. His best position in the John Smith's Grand National came when he partnered St Mellion Fairway into fourth in 1998. Thornton, who is very short-sighted, wears contact lenses when riding, earning the nickname "Lenzio." He is an avid Newcastle United supporter. He has set riding 1,000 winners as a target and he is steadily closing on that goal. Thornton is the oldest jockey riding in this year's race. He is married to Yvonne and they have one son, Harry. He does some media work, principally for Radio 5 Live.

**Grand National record: 1996 Over The Stream (13th); 1997 River Mandate (PU 21st); 1998 St Mellion Fairway (4th); 1999 Nahthen Lad (11th); 2000 Stormy Passage (Fell 22nd); 2001 Lance Armstrong (PU 19th); 2002 Murt's Man (PU 17th); 2003 Gingembre (PU bef 24th); 2004 Bounce Back (Fell 6th); 2005 Foly Pleasant (Fell 20th); 2007 Simon (Fell 25th); 2012 Tatenen (UR 8th); 2013 Tatenen (Fell 12th)**

# Rule The World (GB) 9-10-07

**Breeding:** b g Sulamani – Elaine Tully (Persian Bold)  
**Breeder:** Mrs P G Wilkins & R J McAlpine  
**Born:** Mar 30, 2007  
**Owner:** Gigginstown House Stud  
**Trainer:** Mouse Morris  
**Jockey:** David Mullins  
**Form:** 12112P/14216/225222/6S32254

\*Was acquired by his current connections for €90,000 as an unraced three-year-old. By then his half-brother Velnamar, in the same stable, showed himself a high-class novice hurdler, beaten narrowly in the two and a half-mile Grade 1 at the Cheltenham Festival.

\*Started his career with a point-to-point victory, and went on to win a bumper and two novices' hurdles before following in Velnamar's hoofprints at Cheltenham, chasing home The New One. His latest win came over hurdles at Naas more than two years ago.

\*Remarkably, he has yet to win over fences but in 13 tries has finished second seven times, including to Thunder And Roses in last season's Irish Grand National and most recently to No More Heroes in a Grade 1 novices' contest at Leopardstown in December.

\*Has never fallen or unseated – his only non-completion came when he stumbled and slipped up on the flat before the last when poised to win the Galway Plate in July last year.

\*His latest run brought a staying-on fifth over three miles at Naas last month on heavy going, and better ground will be in his favour.

**Race record: Starts 24; Wins 5; 2nd 10; 3rd 1. Win & Place Prize Money: £201,805.**

## Gigginstown House Stud

Gigginstown House Stud, covering 1,000 acres at Delvin near Mullingar, Co Westmeath, Ireland is the residence of Michael O'Leary, chief executive of Ryanair, Europe's largest budget airline. O'Leary was born in Mullingar, County Westmeath on March 20, 1961 and educated at Clongowes Wood College in County Kildare before reading business studies at Trinity College Dublin. He was a tax consultant at accountants KPMG in 1984, became financial adviser to Tony Ryan, founder of Ryanair two years later and deputy chief executive of Ryanair in 1988. He progressed to chief operating officer of Ryanair in 1991. He has overseen the rapid development of Ryanair since 1994 when he became chief executive, and his worth was valued at £598 million in the 2015 Sunday Times Rich List. O'Leary started off with horses on the Flat with David Wachman and Mick Halford, but he has rapidly become a major Jump owner with a string only rivalled by J P McManus. His team of over 170 horses in training is split between a wide range of trainers in Ireland and his racing enthusiasm was kick-started when one of his first horses, War Of Attrition, won the 2006 Betfred Cheltenham Gold Cup. His 15 Cheltenham Festival winners include this year's Cheltenham Gold Cup hero Don Cossack. Other Festival winners include Weapon's Amnesty in the 2009 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle and 2010 RSA Chase, First Lieutenant in the 2011 Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle and Sir Des Champs in the 2012 JLT Novices' Chase. O'Leary's brother Eddie, based at Lynn Lodge Stud in Mullingar, oversees the Gigginstown racing operation; the young horses are brought along at Pat Doyle's County Tipperary stables and in point-to-points by Gordon Elliott. Bryan Cooper is retained jockey for Gigginstown. He is married to former banker Anita (Farrell) and they have four children. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2009 Hear The Echo (FELL 30th); 2012 Tharawaat (8th); 2014 Quito De La Roque (PU 21st); 2015 First Lieutenant (16th)**

## Michael (Mouse) Morris IRE (Fethard, Co Tipperary)

**Born:** April 4, 1951 **Background:** Michael Morris has been known as Mouse since his early days as an amateur rider. His late father, Lord Killanin, once headed the International Olympic Committee, while his brother Redmond's credits as a film producer include The Reader. As a youngster in Ireland, Mouse showed little enthusiasm for school, preferring to spend his mornings riding out for a local trainer and did not enjoy his time when sent to Ampleforth College in Yorkshire. He served his apprenticeship at the celebrated Frenchie Nicholson jockey academy in Cheltenham alongside Pat Eddery and Tony Murray. Back in Ireland, he rode principally for Edward O'Grady, winning the Irish Grand National on Billycan in 1977 and Cheltenham's Queen Mother Champion Chase twice on Skymas in 1976 and 1977. **Training Career:** He took out his trainer's licence in 1980 and immediately established himself as one of Ireland's leading Jump trainers. Morris has seven Cheltenham Festival wins to his credit, the best being Buck House's victory in the 1986 Queen Mother Champion Chase and War Of Attrition's 2006 Cheltenham Gold Cup success. He won his second Irish Grand National on Easter Monday, 2016 with Rogue Angel - his first came with Hear The Echo in 2008. He saddled First Lieutenant, the 2011 Neptune Investment Novices' Hurdle winner at the Cheltenham Festival, to take the 2013 Betfred Bowl at Aintree. Morris trains at Everardsgrange, Fethard, in Co. Tipperary. In 1984, Door Step became his first Crabbie's Grand National runner, but fell at the 18th fence. Lastofthebrownies finished a best-placed fourth for him in 1989.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1984 Door Step (FELL 18th); 1987 Attitude Adjuster (8th), Hi Harry (Ref 19th); 1988 Attitude Adjuster (5th), Lastofthebrownies (FELL 28th); 1989 Lastofthebrownies (4th), Attitude Adjuster (12th), Cranlome (FELL 2nd); 1990 Lastofthebrownies (5th); 1991 Mick's Star (13th); 1992 Rawhide (UR 1st); 1995 For William (15th); 1996 Three Brownies (6th); 1997 New Co (15th); 2004 Alcapone (PU 25th); 2008 Baily Breeze (8th); 2009 Hear The Echo (FELL 30th); 2015 First Lieutenant (16th)**

## David Mullins

**Born:** June 6, 1996: **Background:** David Mullins is the son of the trainer Tom Mullins and the nephew of the 10-time champion trainer Willie. The Mullins' are a racing dynasty and his grandfather, Paddy, is best known for training the great racemare Dawn Run, who still remains the only horse to win both the Stan James Champion Hurdle and the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup. Being born into the great racing family there is no surprise the path he chose. For one so young, he has already tasted success at the top-level, his most famous victory to date was aboard Nichols Canyon, trained by his uncle Willie, in the Grade One StanJames.com Morgiana Hurdle at Leopardstown when he downed the unbeaten 2015 Stan James Champion Hurdle hero, Faugheen. He had won a Grade Three chase on Devils Bride, again for his uncle. He turned professional 2014 and his riding has caught the eye of some of the biggest names in the sport, most significantly Gigginstown House Stud, owners he will be riding Rule The World for in this year's Crabbie's Grand National. It is Mullins' first ride in the race.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: no previous rides**

## Saint Are (FR) 10-10-05

**Breeding:** b/br g Network (GER) - Fortanea (FR) (Video Rock (FR))

**Breeder:** Jacques Cypres

**Born:** April 5, 2006

**Owner:** David Fox

**Trainer:** Tom George

**Jockey:** Paddy Brennan

**Form:** 7/53172F31/02524U01/F43090/84PF/33312-671

\*Joined Tom George at the beginning of last season and ended the campaign with an excellent second in the 2015 Crabbie's Grand National, staying on well to get within a length and three quarters of the winner Many Clouds.

\*Ninth of the 17 finishers in the 2013 Crabbie's Grand National when trained by Tim Vaughan.

\*Dual winner over the Mildmay Course at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival, having captured the Grade One Doom Bar Sefton Novices' Hurdle in 2011 and the Listed Betfred Handicap Chase in 2012.

\*Warmed up for this year's race with a narrow victory in a veterans' handicap chase at Doncaster on February 24.

\*Best form shown on good ground.

**Jump race record: Starts: 35; Wins: 5; 2nd: 4; 3rd: 6; Win & Place Prize Money: £380,686**

### David Fox

David Fox lives in Staffordshire and is chairman and chief executive of Walsall-based Power Panels Electrical Systems, which, according to the company's website, was founded in 1967 and is one of the global leaders in electrical control systems, cable harnesses and sub contract manufacturing solutions. Fox says his company deals with "12 of the world's number one companies in the field of electrical systems". He adds: "We make the machinery that makes parts for industries ranging from automotives to aerospace and medical. Most people in the UK will have something in their homes that we have put our hands on." He employs more than 200 people, but due to new technology he says that number could rise dramatically in the near future as the company expands into fields such as airport security and food packaging. Fox was an apprentice in his field who bought a failing company in 1979 and built it up. He remembers with delight the day the company turned over £1,000,000, but says it now generates that level of business every month. His interest in racing formed as a young man - "somewhere between football and cricket and probably through having a bet". In 2005 he entertained some business clients at Worcester races and enjoyed the experience so much he decided to get involved as an owner. He says it is his ambition to own a Cheltenham Festival winner. Fox, who has a son, two daughters and six grandchildren, has enjoyed two Aintree victories with Saint Are - the Doom Bar Sefton Novices' Hurdle and Listed Betfred Handicap Chase.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 2013 Saint Are (9th); 2015 Saint Are (2nd)**

### Tom George (Slad, Gloucestershire)

**Born:** June 4, 1967 **Background:** Tom George began his training career in 1993 with 14 horses from his base at Springbank Stables in Slad, near Stroud, Gloucestershire. At the age of 26, he was one of the youngest jump trainers in the country, but he had plenty of experience, having previously worked for Martin Pipe, Arthur Moore and Francois Doumen, three of the most successful trainers in England, Ireland and France respectively. Tom George's local track is Cheltenham and he won there with Newton Point in his rookie season. In the 2003/2004 season he sent out 50 winners for the first time from 65 horses. A surge for his yard came when Galileo won the Royal & SunAlliance Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham in March, 2002, under Jason Maguire, providing the trainer with an initial success at The Festival. The horse was racing for only the second time over hurdles, having been bought off the Flat in Poland. Nacarat provided George with a Grade One success in the Betfred Bowl at the 2011 Grand National Festival while he has also enjoyed Grade One success in France, with Halley taking the Prix Maurice Gillois Grand Steeple-Chase 4 Ans in 2011. George trained God's Own to land the Grade One Ryanair Novice Chase at the Punchestown Festival in 2014 and the same horse gave him success in the Haldon Gold Cup at Exeter early last season. God's Own has since finished second in the Racing Post Arkle Chase (2015) and fourth in the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (2015) at the Cheltenham Festival. He is married to Sophie, daughter of former trainer John Edwards, who helps source horses for the yard. Edwards trained Little Polveir, who had had three previous runs in the Grand National, up until two months before the horse was sold for 15,000 guineas to trainer Toby Balding who sent the horse out to win the 1989 Grand National. Edwards trained the 7/1 favourite Dixton House that year, who fell at the sixth, and had his best Grand National finish when Sandy Sprite led at the last in 1971 before finishing fifth.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2003 Tremallt (9th); 2006 Lord Of Illusion (PU 17th); 2009 Kilbeggan Blade (PU 21st); 2013 Big Fella Thanks (UR 8th); 2015 Saint Are (2nd)**

## **Paddy Brennan**

**Born:** April 13, 1981, Ardrahan in Co Galway, Ireland **Background:** spent the summer of 1995 working for Co Kildare handler Gerry Stack before embarking on a five-season apprenticeship with the leading Irish Flat trainer Jim Bolger, for whom he rode eight winners. The first of those came on Ivory Isle at Gowran Park in August, 1998. He became too heavy and tall for the Flat and moved to Paul Nicholls' stable in England as a conditional jockey in 2001. He stayed there for two and a half years, riding winners for Nicholls and Jeff King, before joining Philip Hobbs in the 2003/04 season as one of that yard's conditionals. Brennan also struck up a good rapport with Ashley Brook, on whom he won the Grade One Maghull Novices' Chase at Aintree in 2005, and enjoyed a first Cheltenham Festival success that year aboard Shamayoun in the Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle. Brennan was appointed as retained rider to owners Andrea and Graham Wylie for the 2006/07 season after dropping into trainer Howard Johnson's County Durham yard for a cup of tea and toast. He rewarded those connections when guiding Inglis Drever to victory in the 2007 Grade One Ladbrokes World Hurdle at Cheltenham - the gelding's second success in the race. Brennan left Johnson and joined Gloucestershire-based handler Nigel Twiston-Davies in the 2007/08 season. The 2010 victory aboard Imperial Commander in the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup provided Brennan with what he described as the best day of his life and he has ridden a total of six winners at the Cheltenham Festival. He has a good record at Aintree, including Ashley Brook's win in the 2005 Maghull Novices' Chase and Hakim's victory in that year's Betfred Grand Sefton Handicap Chase over the big fences. He was on Pettifour when taking the 2008 Sefton Novices' Hurdle, rode Irish Raptor in 2009 when scoring over the National fences in the Crabbie's Topham Chase, took the 2009 Manifesto Novices' Chase on Tartak, captured the 2010 Aintree Hurdle on Khyber Kim and was successful on Nacarat in the 2011 Betfred Bowl. He left Twiston-Davies after four years to become a freelance in March, 2011. His best British tally of winners was 104 in 2007/8. This season he has ridden the Colin Tizzard-trained Cue Card to big-race success in the Bet365 Charlie Hall Chase at Wetherby, the Grade One Betfair Chase at Haydock and the Grade One William Hill King George VI Chase at Kempton, but the pair fell three fences from home when disputing the lead in the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup last month. On the opening day of the 2016 Crabbie's Grand National Festival, Brennan rode Cue Card to victory in the Grade One Betfred Bowl and he enjoyed another Grade One victory on God's Own in the JLT melling Chase on the second day, Ladies Day.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2005 Double Honour (UR 21st); 2007 Bewleys Berry (FELL 22nd); 2008 Fundamentalist (FELL 3rd); 2009 Knowhere (PU 25th); 2010 Irish Raptor (FELL 14th); 2012 Giles Cross (PU 11th); 2015 Saint Are (2nd)**

# Shutthefrontdoor (IRE) 9-10-11

**Breeding:** b/br g Accordion - Hurricane Girl (IRE) (Strong Gale)

**Breeder:** Deirdre Connolly

**Born:** April 28, 2007

**Owner:** J P McManus

**Trainer:** Jonjo O'Neill

**Form:** 111/31114/12461/15-3P

\*Far from disgraced when sent off favourite for last year's Crabbie's Grand National, finishing fifth under A P McCoy who was having his final ride in the race.

\*Emerged as a potential Aintree contender when staying on well to land the Irish Grand National by three quarters of a length at Fairyhouse in April 2014.

\*Two runs this season, finishing third in a handicap hurdle at Aintree in November before pulling up in the Greatwood Gold Cup Handicap Chase at Newbury on March 5, after which he was found to have abscesses in two feet.

\*Worked at before racing at Huntingdon on March 28.

**Jump race record: Starts: 17; Wins: 9; 2nd: 1; 3rd: 1; Win & Place Prize Money: £207,567**

## J P McManus

**Born:** March 10, 1951 in Co Limerick, Ireland. **Background:** John Patrick 'J P' McManus attended the Christian Brothers school on Sexton Street, Limerick. He left his father's plant hire business at the age of 20 to become a racecourse bookmaker, but then took the less well-trodden route of gamekeeper-turned-poacher when becoming a professional punter. McManus recalls one of his first bets as being on Merryman II in the 1960 Grand National when he was just nine, but the bet that changed his life was £4 on Linden Tree in a Newmarket maiden in 1970, the horse winning at 100/8. He had another £4 on when Linden Tree won the Observer Gold Cup at 25/1, and £5 each-way at 33/1 for the Derby, when the horse beat all bar Mill Reef. He was dubbed "the Sundance Kid" by journalist Hugh McIlvanney after landing a number of major gambles during the 1970s. McManus has a host of business interests including dealing on the financial markets from his Geneva, Switzerland, base and part-ownership of the Sandy Lane Hotel in Barbados, where he also has a house. With John Magnier, he bought a 28.7% stake in Manchester United through the Cubic Expression company before subsequently selling out to US tycoon Malcolm Glazer in 2005. He was in the news shortly after that because of his stake in the pub and restaurant operator Mitchells and Butler. In 2015, the Sunday Times estimated McManus' wealth at £586 million, making him the 16th richest person in Ireland. **Racing interests:** McManus purchased his first racehorse, Cill Dara, at the age of 26 and is the biggest Jump owner in terms of numbers in Britain and Ireland, with some 400 horses in training. He owns Jackdaws Castle, the Gloucestershire yard that Jonjo O'Neill trains from, and has invested heavily in improving facilities since purchasing the property in 2001. Mister Donovan provided him with his first Cheltenham Festival success in the 1982 Supreme Novices' Hurdle and McManus has enjoyed 48 winners in total at the meeting - far more than any other owner. The mighty Istabraq is the most revered horse he has owned following three consecutive victories in the Champion Hurdle (1998, 1999, 2000), while he has also won a Cheltenham Gold Cup with Synchronised (2012) and three World Hurdles with Baracouda (2002 & 2003) and More Of That (2014). A full 28 years after his first runner in the race, McManus finally achieved a long-held ambition when Don't Push It, trained by Jonjo O'Neill and ridden by A P McCoy, won the 2010 Crabbie's Grand National. He has been British champion owner for the 2005/6, 2006/7, 2008/9, 2009/10, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 & 2014/15 seasons. He retained A P McCoy as his main jockey from April, 2004 until the rider's retirement in April 2015. Barry Geraghty has taken over that position, with McCoy having an advisory role. Frank Berry is the McManus racing manager. **Other interests:** McManus does a lot of work for charity and his Pro-Am golf tournament, which takes place every five years, has raised over 100 million euros. McManus is also a keen backgammon player and a big hurling fan. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1982 Deep Gale (FELL 1st); 1988 Bucko (PU 27th); 1992 Laura's Beau (3rd); 1994 Laura's Beau (FELL 6th); 1996 Wylde Hide (UR 24th); 1997 Wylde Hide (UR 22nd); 1998 Gimme Five (5th); 2002 Spot The difference (UR 27th); 2003 Youlneverwalkalone (PU 13th); 2004 Clan Royal (2nd), Spot The difference (5th), Risk Accessor (UR 6th), Le Coudray (FELL 22nd); 2005 Innox (7th), Spot The difference (18th), Shamawan (21st), Clan Royal (CO 22nd), Le Coudray (PU 21st), Risk Accessor (UR 2nd); 2006 Clan Royal (3rd), Risk Accessor (5th), Innox (FELL 1st), First Gold (UR 23rd); 2007 L'Ami (10th), Clan Royal (11th); 2008 King Johns Castle (2nd), L'Ami (FELL 2nd), Bob Hall (PU 19th), Butler's Cabin (FELL 22nd); 2009 Butler's Cabin (7th), Reveillez (BD 3rd), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), L'Ami (PU 30th); 2010 DON'T PUSH IT (WON), Can't Buy Time (FELL 8th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th), King Johns Castle (refused to race); 2011 Don't Push It (3rd), Blue Sea Cracker (14th), Quolibet (UR 11th), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 Sunnyhillboy (2nd), Synchronised (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 10th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Colbert Station (UR 15th), Lost Glory (PU 17th), Sunnyhillboy (UR last); 2014 Double Seven (3rd), Colbert Station (PU 25th); 2015 Shutthefrontdoor (5th), Cause Of Causes (8th), Wyck Hill (PU 29th)**

## Jonjo O'Neill (Temple Guiting, Gloucestershire)

Jonjo O'Neill has established himself as one of the top Jump trainers and enjoyed his best season in 2013/14, with 134 British winners and over £1.5 million in prize money. The trainer's biggest success came when he sent out the 2010 Crabbie's Grand National winner Don't Push It, owned by J P McManus and ridden by A P McCoy. It was a first Crabbie's Grand National success for all of them. He has also saddled the runner-up twice, with Clan Royal (2004) and Sunnyhillboy (2012), plus two thirds. However, as a jockey, he endured terrible luck in the race and failed to complete the course on each of his eight rides. He retired from the saddle at the end of the 1985/86 season, having

been champion Jump jockey twice. O'Neill survived a battle with lymphatic cancer not long after that. He started training near Penrith, Cumbria, in 1987 and moved to his present base at Jackdaws Castle in Gloucestershire, near Cheltenham, when the yard was bought by J P McManus in 2001. There has been considerable investment in facilities since and a growing ambition. He has been leading trainer at Aintree's Crabbie's Grand National Festival four times, with three wins over the three days in 2010, the same number in 2007, four in 2003 and four again in 2002. He has also sent out 26 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and trained two Royal Ascot winners on the Flat. **Born** - April 13, 1952. **Background** - Champion Jump jockey twice (1977/78 and 1979/80) and set a then-record for winners in a season (149) in his first championship year. The most sensational moment of his riding career came when he won the Cheltenham Gold Cup on Dawn Run in 1986 as the mare became the only horse to win that trophy after having previously captured the Champion Hurdle (1984), again with O'Neill in the saddle. He also won the Gold Cup on Alverton (1979) and the Champion Hurdle on Sea Pigeon (1980). He enjoyed nine Cheltenham Festival successes and partnered 901 winners in all. **First winner as a trainer** - Shelbourne, Ayr, January 30, 1987 **Other major wins at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival:** Aintree Anniversary 4-Y-O Juvenile Hurdle: 2002 Quazar; Betfred Bowl: 2007 Exotic Dancer, Doom Bar Aintree Hurdle: 2004 Rhinestone Cowboy; Betfred Mildmay Novices' Chase: 2014 Holywell, Aintree Melling Chase: 2010 Albertas Run; Crabbie's Topham Chase: 2003 Clan Royal, Doom Bar Sefton Novices' Hurdle: 2003 Iris's Gift, 2006 Black Jack Ketchum, Weatherbys Private Banking Champion Standard Open NHF Race: 2003 Classic Native, Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle: 2004 Iris's Gift **Other big-race wins as a trainer include:** Cheltenham Gold Cup (2012 Synchronised), JCB Triumph Hurdle (2003 Spectroscope), World Hurdle (2004 Iris's Gift, 2014 More Of That), RSA Chase (2008 Albertas Run), Ryanair Chase (2010 & 2011 Albertas Run), JLT Novices' Chase (2014 Taquin Du Seuil), Christmas Hurdle (2002 & 2003 Intersky Falcon), Fighting Fifth Hurdle (2002 Intersky Falcon), Irish Grand National (2007 Butler's Cabin, 2014 Shutthefrontdoor), Betfred Becher Chase (2003 Clan Royal), December Gold Cup (1999 Legal Right, 2006 Exotic Dancer), Lexus Chase (2008 Exotic Dancer, 2011 Synchronised), Welsh National (2002 Mini Sensation, 2010 Synchronised), Champion Stayers' Hurdle (2007 Refinement), Paddy Power Gold Cup (2006 Exotic Dancer, 2013 Johns Spirit) **Crabbie's Grand National record: 2003 Carbury Cross (7th); 2004 Clan Royal (2nd), Joss Naylor (PU 19th); 2005 Simply Gifted (3rd), Shamawan (21st), Native Emperor (UR 9th), Clan Royal (CO 22nd); 2006 Clan Royal (3rd), Risk Accessor (5th); 2007 Clan Royal (11th); 2008 Bob Hall (PU 19th), Butler's Cabin (FELL 22nd); 2009 Butler's Cabin (7th), Reveillez (BD 3rd), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th); 2010 DON'T PUSH IT (WON), Can't Buy Time (FELL 8th); 2011 Don't Push It (3rd), Quolibet (UR 11th), Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th); 2012 Sunnyhillboy (2nd), Synchronised (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 10th); 2013 Lost Glory (PU 17th), Sunnyhillboy (UR 30th); 2014 Twirling Magnet (FELL 1st), Burton Port (UR 2nd); 2015 Shutthefrontdoor (5th)**

### **Barry Geraghty**

**Born:** County Meath, September 16, 1979 **Background:** Barry Geraghty is one of six children from a "horse-mad" family that hails from Drumree in Co Meath. His father 'Tucker' was a useful amateur and trains a few horses in addition to his riding school and livery yard and his now US-based brother Ross, won the 2002 Irish National on The Bunny Boiler. Like so many Irish jockeys, Geraghty has a background in pony racing, riding his last winner in that sphere in September, 1996, before becoming apprenticed to Noel Meade that month and having his first ride in October, 1996. He rode his first winner aboard Stagulier at Down Royal on January 29, 1997. It was for trainer Jessica Harrington that he first sprang to prominence, partnering her 1998 Midlands National winner Miss Orchestra. Geraghty will forever be associated with the great Moscow Flyer who provided him with his first Cheltenham Festival victory in the 2002 Arkle Chase and went on to add the Queen Mother Champion Chase in 2003 and 2005, as well as a host of other championship races including the Grade One Melling Chase at Aintree in 2004 and 2005. He crowned the 2002/03 season with victory in the Crabbie's Grand National aboard Monty's Pass, something which contributed to him being voted RTE Sports Personality of the year by Irish television viewers. He captured the 2005 Cheltenham Gold Cup on the Tom Taaffe-trained Kicking King the day after Moscow Flyer's emotional second Queen Mother Champion Chase triumph. Geraghty teamed up with Lambourn trainer Nicky Henderson at the start of the 2008/09 season, splitting his time between Ireland and Britain. Geraghty's association with Henderson has already yielded a Champion Hurdle victory in 2009 with Punjabi and he was top jockey at The Festival in 2012 with five successes including the Queen Mother Champion Chase on Finian's Rainbow. In 2013 he won the Queen Mother Champion Chase on Sprinter Sacre at the Cheltenham Festival and also landed the Cheltenham Gold Cup on Bobs Worth, a horse that he had bought as a youngster. In total, he has enjoyed 34 victories at the Cheltenham Festival including three in 2014, headed by Jezki in the Stan James Champion Hurdle, who was trained by his old boss Jessica Harrington. In 2015 he won two races at the Festival including Peace and Co in the JCB Triumph Hurdle a race he won again this season on Ivanovich Gorbатов. After Sir A P McCoy retired from the saddle at the end of last season, Geraghty was employed as the retained rider for J P McManus and splits his time between Britain and Ireland.

**Family:** Geraghty is married to Paula and they have three children.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2000 Call It A Day (6th); 2001 Hanakham (Fell 2nd); 2002 Alexander Banquet (Unseated 6th); 2003 MONTY'S PASS (WON); 2004 Monty's Pass (4th); 2005 Monty's Pass (16th); 2006 Puntal (6th); 2007 Slim Pickings (3rd); 2008 Slim Pickings (4th); 2009 Golden Flight (Fell 1st); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th); 2011 Or Noir De Somoza (Fell 6th); 2012 Shakalakaboomboom (9th); 2013 Roberto Golback (UR 30th); 2014 Triolo D'Alene (PU 22nd)**

## Silviniaco Conti (FR) 10-11-08

**Breeding:** ch g Dom Alco (FR) — Gazelle Lulu (FR) (Altayan))

**Breeder:** Patrick Joubert

**Born:** April 14, 2006

**Owner:** Potensis Bloodstock Ltd & Chris Giles

**Trainer:** Paul Nicholls

**Jockey:** Noel Fehily

**Jump Form:** 11/11134/31241/111F3/3141/51171-22P1

\*Seven-time Grade One winner over fences, including back-to-back victories in both King George VI Chase (2013 & 2014 ) at Kempton Park and the Betfred Bowl Chase (2014 & 2015) over the Mildmay fences at Aintree during the Crabbie's Grand National Festival.

\*Pulled up in this season's King George, but bounced back in first-time blinkers to win the Grade One Ascot Chase by 20 lengths on February 20.

\*Half-brother to fellow Crabbie's Grand National contender Ucello Conti.

**Jump race record: Starts: 30; Wins: 16; 2nd: 3; 3rd: 4; Win & Place Prize Money: £1,088,778**

### Potensis Bloodstock Ltd & Chris Giles

**Background:** Potensis Bloodstock Limited represents the racing interests of Jared Sullivan. Sullivan, born in May, 1973, founded Potensis, a leading UK specialist construction and property recruiter, in 2000. He initially had horses with Charlie Mann, before moving his horses to Paul Nicholls and Nick Williams in 2010. Although he'd had horses with Paul Nicholls for a year beforehand, it was at Doncaster's Spring Sale in May, 2009, that owner Chris Giles shot to prominence when paying £320,000 for Tricky Trickster from the annual Million In Mind Partnership dispersal. Tricky Trickster went on to win a Grade Two contest at Newbury and also finished ninth in the 2010 Crabbie's Grand National. Giles hails from Scotland where his father Michael founded Giles Insurance Brokers in 1967. Chris Giles, with his brother Nick, helped grow the company. The Giles Group was sold to New York-based insurance broker Arthur J Gallagher for £233 million in 2013 – a deal which reportedly bagged £84 million for Chris Giles himself. In addition to their success with Silviniaco Conti, Sullivan and Giles have also enjoyed significant victories with Zarkandar, a four-time Grade One scorer including in the 2013 Aintree Hurdle. Sullivan and Giles decided to part ways in 2013, resulting in a dispersal sale of the majority of their horses, although they do continue to own Silviniaco Conti together. **Crabbie's Grand National Record (Chris Giles): 2010 Tricky Trickster (9th)**

### Paul Nicholls (Manor Farm Stables, Ditcheat, Shepton Mallet, Somerset)

**Born:** April 17, 1962 at Lydney, Gloucestershire **Background:** The son of a policeman, he grew up in Olveston. Started out in point-to-points after leaving school at 16 and worked for a couple of yards before becoming a conditional jockey with Josh Gifford for two years and then joining Devon trainer David Barons. He partnered 119 winners between 1980 and 1989, with his biggest British successes coming in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury on Broadheath (1986) and Playschool (1987). He struggled to keep his weight down and gave up race riding. Between 1989 and 1991, he was assistant trainer to Barons, who trained Broadheath and Playschool and sent out Seagram to win the 1991 Grand National. Has been training at Manor Farm Stables in Ditcheat, Somerset, since taking out a licence on November 1, 1991. Started out with eight horses. The facilities have kept on being improved. His daughter Megan is an apprentice jockey with trainer Richard Hannon. **Achievements:** Nine-time champion Jump trainer (2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2013/14, 2014/15) and became the first handler to accrue more than £4 million in a season in 2007/08. He gained his 2,000th winner at Down Royal on November 5, 2011, less than 20 years after taking his licence, making him the fastest Jump trainer to reach the landmark figure. Has sent out 40 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and is the jointly-third most successful trainer there. His successes there include four victories or more in three of the meeting's showpiece contests - the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (1999 Call Equiname, 2004 Azertyuiop, 2008 & 2009 Master Minded, 2015 Dodging Bullets), the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup (1999 See More Business, 2007 & 2009 Kauto Star, 2008 Denman) and the Ryanair World Hurdle (Big Buck's 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012). He also won the Stan James Champion Hurdle with Rock On Ruby in 2012. At Aintree, he captured the Crabbie's Grand National with Neptune Collonges in 2012 and sent out Big Buck's for four consecutive victories (2009 to 2012) in the race which is now the Grade One Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle. He saddled Silviniaco Conti to win the Grade One Betfred Bowl in 2014 and 2015. He has been leading trainer at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival three times - in 2008, 2011 & 2015.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1992 Just So (6th); 1996 Vicompt De Valmont (10th), Deep Bramble (PU 29th), Brackenfield (UR 19th); 1997 Straight Talk (FELL 14th); 1998 What A Hand (FELL 1st), Court Melody (FELL 6th), General Crack (PU 11th); 1999 Strong Chairman (15th), Double Thriller (FELL 1st); 2000 Earthmover (FELL 4th), Torduff Express (FELL 13th), Flaked Oats (FELL 20th), Escartefigue (UR 30th); 2001 Earthmover (FELL 4th); 2002 Murt's Man (PU 17th), Ad Hoc (BD 27th); 2003 Montifault (5th), Fadalko (UR 6th), Ad Hoc (UR 19th), Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd), Torduff Express (UR 27th); 2004 Exit To Wave (PU 9th); 2005 Royal Auclair (2nd), Heros Collonges (8th), L'Aventure (15th), Ad Hoc (FELL 22nd); 2006 Royal Auclair (FELL 1st), Le Duc (UR 8th), Silver Birch (FELL 15th), Heros Collonges (UR 15th), Le Roi Miguel (PU 19th), Cornish Rebel (PU 19th); 2007 Le Duc (UR 6th), Royal Auclair (FELL 9th), Eurotrek (PU bef 22nd), Thisthatandtother (PU 30th); 2008 Cornish Sett (12th), Turko (FELL 25th), Mr Pointment (PU 30th); 2009 My Will (3rd), Big Fella Thanks (6th), Cornish Sett (17th), Eurotrek (PU 17th); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th), Tricky Trickster (9th), My Will (FELL 4th), Nozic (UR 20th); 2011 Niche Market (5th), Ormais (FELL 4th), The Tother One (FELL 6th), What A Friend (PU 27th); 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2013 Join Together (12th), What A Friend (PU 19th), Harry The Viking (PU 26th); 2014 Rocky Creek (5th), Hawkes Point (18th), Tidal Bay (UR 8th); 2015 Mon Parrain (11th), Rocky Creek (17th), Rebel Rebellion (PU 26th), Unioniste (FELL 5th)**

### **Noel Fehily**

**Born:** December 24, 1974 in County Cork, Ireland **Background:** After gaining experience on the point-to-point circuit and in hunter chases in his home country, he began riding in Britain as an amateur and gained his first success on Ivy Boy at Plumpton on November 16, 1998. He rode 12 winners in that first campaign and turned professional after two successes in 1999/2000, which he ended with a score of 17. Has been dogged by injury throughout his career, but is currently enjoying a fine run as a freelance and has won plenty of Grade One races in recent years, especially on Silviniaco Conti who has provided two victories in the King George VI Chase at Kempton (2013 & 2014), two Betfred Bowl Chases (2014 & 2015) at Aintree, the Betfair Chase (2014) at Haydock Park and the Ascot Chase in February, 2016. Fehily has partnered three Cheltenham Festival winners, the biggest being aboard Rock On Ruby in the 2012 Stan James Champion Hurdle, and the latest coming on Unowhatimeanharry (Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle) on the final day this year. Fehily rides several of the second-string horses for Paul Nicholls as well as many of Harry Fry's top horses. The latter handler provided him with a Grade One success when Bitofapuzzle at Fairyhouse in 2015. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2001 Moral Support (REF 8th); 2002 Celibate (6th); 2003 Good Shuil (PU 19th); 2004 Alcapone (PU 25th); 2005 Merchants Friend (FELL 10th); 2006 Risk Accessor (5th); 2007 Naunton Brook (PU 23rd); 2008 Bob Hall (PU 19th); 2009 Can't Buy Time (FELL 18th); 2012 State Of Play (UR 5th); 2013 Treacle (UR 8th); 2014: Rocky Creek (5th); 2015 Unioniste (FELL 5th)**

## Sir Des Champs (FR) 10-10-13

**Breeding:** b g Robin Des Champs (FR) — Liste En Tete (FR) (Video Rock (FR))

**Breeder:** Dominique Clayeux

**Born:** May 28, 2006

**Owner:** Gigginstown House Stud

**Trainer:** Willie Mullins IRE

**Jockey:** Ruby Walsh

**Jump Form:** 1/11/11111/24121/F4/157

\*Three-time Grade One winner over fences and runner-up to Bobs Worth in the 2013 Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup.

\*Dual Cheltenham Festival hero – 2011 Martin Pipe Conditional Jockeys' Handicap Hurdle and 2012 JLT Novices' Chase.

\*Off the track for 23 months before making a winning return in a two-mile, six-furlong Listed chase at Thurles on November 23.

\*Well-beaten subsequently in the Lexus Chase and Irish Gold Cup, both at Leopardstown, finishing fifth and seventh respectively.

**Jump race record: Starts: 18; Wins: 11; 2nd: 2; 3rd: -; Win & Place Prize Money: £499,874**

### Gigginstown House Stud

Gigginstown House Stud, covering 1,000 acres at Delvin near Mullingar, Co Westmeath, Ireland is the residence of Michael O'Leary, chief executive of Ryanair, Europe's largest budget airline. O'Leary was born in Mullingar, County Westmeath on March 20, 1961 and educated at Clongowes Wood College in County Kildare before reading business studies at Trinity College Dublin. He was a tax consultant at accountants KPMG in 1984, became financial adviser to Tony Ryan, founder of Ryanair two years later and deputy chief executive of Ryanair in 1988. He progressed to chief operating officer of Ryanair in 1991. He has overseen the rapid development of Ryanair since 1994 when he became chief executive and his worth was valued at £598 million in the 2015 Sunday Times Rich List. O'Leary started off with horses on the Flat with David Wachman and Mick Halford, but he has rapidly become a major Jump owner with a string only rivalled by J P McManus. His team of over 170 horses in training is split between a wide range of trainers in Ireland and his racing enthusiasm was kick-started when one of his first horses, War Of Attrition, won the 2006 Betfred Cheltenham Gold Cup. His 15 Cheltenham Festival winners include this year's Cheltenham Gold Cup hero Don Cossack. Other Festival winners include Weapon's Amnesty in the 2009 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle and 2010 RSA Chase, First Lieutenant in the 2011 Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle and Sir Des Champs in the 2012 JLT Novices' Chase. O'Leary's brother Eddie, based at Lynn Lodge Stud in Mullingar, oversees the Gigginstown racing operation; the young horses are brought along at Pat Doyle's County Tipperary stables and in point-to-points by Gordon Elliott. Bryan Cooper is retained jockey for Gigginstown. Michael O'Leary is married to former banker Anita (Farrell) and they have four children. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2009 Hear The Echo (FELL 30th); 2012 Tharawaat (8th); 2014 Quito De La Roque (PU 21st); 2015 First Lieutenant (16th)**

### Willie Mullins IRE (Bagenalstown, County Carlow)

**Born** September 15, 1956 **Background:** A six-time champion amateur rider in Ireland, his successes in the saddle included the 1983 Fox Hunters' Chase at Aintree on Atha Cliath (among the also-rans were Robert Waley-Cohen, chairman of Cheltenham Racecourse, and former Aintree Racecourse chairman Lord Daresbury). As a jockey in the Crabbie's Grand National, his rides included The Ladys Master, who ran out in 1983, and Hazy Dawn, who fell at the sixth the following year. He hails from one of Ireland's most famous racing families, being a son of the late Paddy Mullins, the outstanding all-round trainer whose most dazzling star was Dawn Run, winner of the 1984 Champion Hurdle and 1986 Cheltenham Gold Cup. **Training Achievements:** Mullins, who took out a training licence in 1988, has been Ireland's champion trainer 10 times, and will win an 11th title this season (and ninth in a row). He has won most of the major prizes in Britain and Ireland, and several in France as well. He has 48 Cheltenham Festival successes to his credit, including Champion Hurdles with Annie Power, Faugheen and Hurricane Fly, and an extraordinary eight in the Champion Bumper, starting with Wither Or Which (which he also rode) in 1996. He has been leading trainer at The Festival for five of the last six years (seven winners this year and a record eight in 2015) and lies second on the all-time list of most successful trainers behind Nicky Henderson. Mullins' star performer in the early part of the century was Florida Pearl, who was placed in two Cheltenham Gold Cups, won the 1998 RSA Chase, the 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2004 Irish Hennessy Cognac Gold Cups in Ireland as well as the 2001 King George VI Chase and the 2002 Betfred Bowl at

Aintree. The brilliant Hurricane Fly won the Stan James Champion Hurdle in 2011 and 2013 and Mullins' Cheltenham Festival winners include the amazing Quevega, who created history by becoming the only horse to win the same race in six consecutive years (the OLBG Mares' Hurdle). Mullins has over 230 horses at his Closutton yard near Bagenalstown in Co Carlow, with many of his current stable superstars such as Faugheen, Annie Power, Douvan and Vautour owned by Rich and Susannah Ricci. His first Grand National runner as a trainer, Micko's Dream, fell at the first in 2000. Mullins, a former chairman of the Irish Trainers' Federation, also suffered disappointment in 2004 when Hedgehunter departed at the final fence in the Crabbie's Grand National when looking assured of a place. He overcame bad luck the following year when Hedgehunter came home 14 lengths clear of Royal Auclair and finished second in 2006. Mullins is set to have more runners than usual during the Crabbie's Grand National Festival as he goes for his first British Jump trainers' championship. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2000 Micko's Dream (FELL 1st); 2002 Alexander Banquet (UR 6th); 2004 Alexander Banquet (FELL 18th), Hedgehunter (FELL 30th); 2005 HEDGEHUNTER (WON); 2006 Hedgehunter (2nd); 2007 Hedgehunter (9th), Homer Wells (PU 22nd), Bothar Na (PU 29th), Livingstonebramble (UR 6th); 2008 Snowy Morning (3rd), Hedgehunter (13th); 2009 Snowy Morning (9th), Irish Invader (11th); 2010 Snowy Morning (6th), Arbor Supreme (UR 15th); 2011 The Midnight Club (6th), Dooney's Gate (FELL 6th), Arbor Supreme (FELL 28th); 2012 The Midnight Club (11th), Quiscover Fontaine (FELL 17th), On His Own (FELL 22nd); 2013 Quiscover Fontaine (16th), Quel Esprit (PU 24th), On His Own (FELL 25th); 2014 Vesper Bell (13th), Prince De Beauchene (16th); 2015 Ballycasey (UR 8th)**

### **Ruby Walsh**

**Born:** May 14, 1979. **Background:** Ruby (Rupert) Walsh is a son of 11-time Irish amateur champion jockey, Ted Walsh, now a trainer and television pundit. He is the second of Walsh's four children; one sister, Katie, is a highly successful amateur rider as well as being an ambassador for Aintree Racecourse and another, Jennifer, acts as his agent. Ruby had his first success under Rules aboard Siren Song at Gowran Park on July 25, 1995, and followed in his father's footsteps when capturing the Irish amateurs' championship at the age of 19 while still studying for his Leaving Certificate. He was champion Irish National Hunt jockey in his first season as a professional (1998/99), has taken the title a further nine times (2000/01, 2004/05, 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2013/14, 2014/15) and is leading this season's title race. Walsh has won the Grand National twice on Papillon (2000, trained by his father) and Hedgehunter (2005). He is the most successful jockey of all time at the Cheltenham Festival (with 52 winners), where he was leading rider (with seven winners) for the 10th time this year. His Cheltenham Festival victories include the 2007 and 2009 Betfred Cheltenham Gold Cup on Kauto Star, three Queen Mother Champion Chases (2004 Azertyuiop, 2008 and 2009 Master Minded), four Champion Hurdles (2011 and 2013 Hurricane Fly, 2015 Faugheen, 2016 Annie Power) and four Ryanair World Hurdles (2012, 2011, 2010 and 2009 Big Buck's). He is acknowledged as one of the best riders and horsemen of his generation and rides primarily for Ireland's top stable, that of Willie Mullins. There are few omissions in his list of big-race successes; he won five King George VI Chases on Kauto Star and is the only current rider to have won all four national Grand Nationals – as well as Papillon and Hedgehunter, he took the Irish version on Numbersixvalverde (2005), the Welsh version on Silver Birch (2005) and the Scottish version on Take Control (2002). He has been the leading rider at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival twice (2008 with five winners and 2003 with four successes). His autobiography was published in October, 2010. He is married to Gillian and the couple have two daughters, Isabelle and Elsa. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2000 PAPILLON (WON); 2001 Papillon (4th); 2002 Kingsmark (4th); 2003 Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd); 2005 HEDGEHUNTER (WON); 2006 Hedgehunter (2nd); 2007 Hedgehunter (9th); 2008 Hedgehunter (13th); 2009 My Will (3rd); 2011 The Midnight Club (6th); 2013 On His Own (FELL 25th); 2015 Ballycasey (UR 8th)**

## Soll (GB) 11-10-11

**Breeding:** ch g Presenting - Montefolene (IRE) (Montelimar (USA)

**Born:** May 4, 2005

**Owner/Breeder:** Derrick Mossop

**Trainer:** David Pipe

**Jockey:** Conor O'Farrell

**Form:** 1/21B/8917/54750/P119-0413

\*Has completed in two renewals of the Crabbie's Grand National, coming home seventh in 2013 when trained by Jo Hughes and finishing ninth in 2015 - in between he was 11th in the 2014 Crabbie's Topham Chase over the National fences.

\*Joined David Pipe (his fourth trainer after John Quinn, Willie Mullins and Hughes) after pulling up in the Grade One Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris in May, 2014.

\*Fourth in Betfred Becher Chase over the Grand National fences at Aintree in December, before capturing the inaugural final of the veterans' chase series at Sandown Park on January 2.

\*Third but beaten a long way when eased down behind fellow Crabbie's Grand National contender Unioniste at Kelso on February 18, his most recent start.

\*A grandson of smart racemare Tri Folene, who won 13 times and jumped round one circuit of the Grand National fences in the 1994 Topham Chase.

\*He was broken in at Mickley Stud in Shropshire by Steve Brookshaw, who trained Lord Gyllene to win the 1997 Grand National.

**Jump race record: Starts: 21; Wins: 6; 2nd: 1; 3rd: 1; Win & Place Prize Money: £144,064**

### Derrick Mossop

Derrick Mossop is a timber merchant; his company Jacksons Timber is based in Cumbria, with branches at Whitehaven, Workington, Barrow-in-Furness and Calderbridge. His hobby and family interest is racing, which he shares with wife Lesley, children Paul, Daniel and Louisa, and granddaughter Jadan. Mossop, born in December, 1952, has owned horses for over 20 years, including Flat winners Jadan and Eternal Legacy with Eric Alston and dual bumper winner Paul Kristian with Willie Mullins. Soll is the best horse to have carried his blue colours; his other winners include Gentleman Jon, Overtoyoulou, Overquest and Papillon Parc. Mossop acquired Soll's dam Montefolene for 20,000 euros at a Goffs auction when she was pregnant with the Grand National contender.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 2013 Soll (7th); 2015 Soll (9th)**

### David Pipe (Nicholashayne, Somerset)

**Born:** February 7, 1973 **Background:** son of 15-time champion Jump trainer Martin Pipe, who in 2001 had 10 runners in the Crabbie's Grand National. He started out riding in point-to-points in 1992, going on to gain 22 wins over the next five seasons, plus two under Rules, which included victory aboard Bonanza Boy in the Ludlow Gold Cup. After finishing as a rider, he had spells with Michael Dickinson in the US, Criquette Head-Maarek in France and Joey Ramsden in South Africa, before setting up as a point-to-point trainer, handling Horus, Lord Atterbury and Celestial Gold, all of whom went on to have successful careers under Rules when transferred to his father's yard. Based at Purchas Farm, a mile away from his father's Pond House, he sent out 164 point-to-point winners over six seasons, including Well Armed, successful 15 times. He picked up the reins at Nicholashayne after his father retired in 2006 and promptly won with the first runner under his own name, Standin Obligation, at Kelso on May 9, 2006 and less than two years later emulated his father's 1994 Grand National victory with Miinnehomia when he saddled Comply Or Die to take the great Aintree race. Comply Or Die finished second in the following year's Grand National. His 10 Grade One victories include Un Temps Pour Tout (2015 French Champion Hurdle), Dynaste (2014 Ryanair Chase) and Moon Racer (2015 Champion Bumper), while he has accumulated 14 Cheltenham Festival successes including one this year. His best British season came in 2006/7 with 134 winners, while he enjoyed 116 successes in 2014/15. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Puntal (8th), Celtic Son (PU 22nd); 2008 COMPLY OR DIE (WON), Milan Deux Mille (15th), Madison Du Berlais (FELL 8th), Vodka Bleu (PU 19th), Joaci (FELL 20th); 2009 Comply Or Die (2nd), Arteea (10th); 2010 Comply Or Die (12th), Piraya (13th), Pablo Du Charmil (Fell 2nd), Madison Du Berlais (FELL 19th), The Package (UR 19th); 2011 Piraya (19th), Or Noir De Somoza (FELL 6th), Comply Or Die (PU 29th); 2012 Swing Bill (10th), Junior (FELL 2nd); 2013 Swing Bill (6th); 2014 Swing Bill (9th), The Package (12th), Our Father (UR 8th); 2015 Soll (9th)**

### Conor O'Farrell

**Born:** July 27, 1989 **Background:** the son of Kilmoganny-based trainer Seamus O'Farrell and younger brother of Irish amateur J P O'Farrell. Conor did not sit on a horse until he was 15. He attended the Racing Academy & Centre of Excellence after a spell riding out for Joe Crowley and worked for Paddy Prendergast after graduating. He worked for Shark Hanlon before being appointed conditional jockey for David Pipe in October, 2010. His first winner came on Miss Latina, Gowran Park, July 8, 2007 while his first British winner was A Little Different, who scored at Perth on September 24, 2009. O'Farrell enjoyed success at the Cheltenham Festival on Buena Vista in the 2011 Pertemps Final, while other big race victories have come in the Midlands Grand National (2011 Minella Four Star) and the Betfair "Fixed Brush" Handicap Hurdle (2011 Dynaste). He has ridden 15 winners so far this season (as of April 6). **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2012 Swing Bill (10th); 2013 Swing Bill (6th); 2014 Swing Bill (9th)**

# The Druids Nephew (IRE) 9-11-00

**Breeding:** b g King's Theatre (Ire) - Gifted (Shareef Dancer)

**Breeder:** Patrick Collins

**Born:** April 28, 2007

**Owner:** The Stonehenge Druids

**Trainer:** Neil Mulholland

**Jockey:** Denis O'Regan

**Form:** 316/623166/4F2P/12751F-662

\*Fancied for last year's Crabbie's Grand National after winning at the Cheltenham Festival and was travelling well in front before falling five fences from home.

\*Lightly-campaigned this season; best effort came last time out when second to The Last Samuri in the Grimthorpe Chase at Doncaster on March 5.

\*From a family of classy Flat stayers; dam is a half-sister to Goodwood Cup winner and Ascot Gold Cup second Sergeyevech.

\*Commanded a price of £40,000 as a four-year-old at Doncaster Sales, three days after winning an Irish point-to-point.

\*Was bought by Andy Turnell, who trained Maori Venture to win the 1987 Grand National. Switched to Neil Mulholland when Turnell suffered a bout of ill-health.

**Jump race record: Starts: 22; Wins: 4; 2nd: 4; 3rd: 2. Win & place prize money: £104,435.**

## The Stonehenge Druids

The Stonehenge Druids are a four-strong syndicate - Robert Atwell, Max Crofts, Garry Villis and Mike Hill - two of whom are involved in the world of property. Atwell is a chartered surveyor and Crofts a one-time president of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. Atwell is a long-time racing fan and owner, having had horses with Andy Turnell in various partnerships and others currently running include Candide, who took a novice chase at Chepstow on March 30, 2015 for Turnell and Fingerontheswitch, who is trained by Neil Mulholland and has won three races since March, 2015. Atwell put together the Stonehenge Druids syndicate after Turnell acquired The Druids Nephew as a youngster and describes his progress as "a dream we never thought could happen". Villis studied economics at Bath University and is Head of Global Insurance Distribution at Barclays W&IM. Hill is the great grandson of Edward Hill, founder of the Hills Group and joined the family business in August, 1994 after spending several years in Bristol working for the accountancy firm KPMG. He left Brunel University with a joint honours degree in European Business Management and Spanish and in 2004 graduated from the University of Bath with an MBA and became chief executive of the Swindon-based Hills Group, which covers waste management, recycling, aggregates, concrete and building quality new homes, in April, 2008. **Crabbie's Grand National record: 2015 The Druids Nephew (FELL 26th)**

## Neil Mulholland (Conkwell Grange, Limpley Stoke, Bath)

**Born:** October 27, 1980. **Background:** He was brought up in Glenavy, near Belfast, in a horsey background - his father Brian, who ran a dental supplies business, bred and owned racehorses - and rode ponies as a youngster. At the age of 11 he started riding out for a local trainer, Ian Duncan, and as an enterprising 12-year-old wrote secretly to Aidan O'Brien asking for work experience. O'Brien, then training jumpers, not only replied but offered a job. Mulholland spent six years with O'Brien at Piltown and then Ballydoyle and had the privilege of exercising Istabraq. He acknowledges his injury-prone jockey career was that of a journeyman rather than a superstar, but it brought 120 winners in Britain and Ireland. His first for O'Brien was Petasus at Listowel in 1996, and the total included a prestige Leopardstown handicap on Call Me Dara in 2000. Mulholland switched to training in 2008 and in his first season had 16 Jump winners, a total that rose to 51 last season, while this season will be his best so far. The Druids Nephew provided him with his first Cheltenham Festival victory in the 2015 Ultima Handicap Chase. Other significant successes came with Midnight Chase, whose 12 victories included the 2012 Cotswold Chase. He and wife Becky moved to newly-refurbished Conkwell Grange Stables in June, 2012 and now have a 100-plus string. **Crabbie's Grand National record: 2015 The Druids Nephew (FELL 26th)**

## Denis O'Regan

**Born:** March 24, 1982, to Denis and Derleine O'Regan, in Youghal, Co Cork **Background:** O'Regan has no immediate family involvement in racing - his father runs Lombards Bar in Youghal. He rode out for his cousin John Crowley as a schoolboy before spending a summer with Francis Flood aged 16. He rode 13 winners as an amateur before turning professional in September, 2003. His first big victory came on Ansar in the 2005 Galway Plate for trainer Dermot Weld and a few months later he rode his first Cheltenham winner when the Michael Hourigan-trained Church Island won a novices' chase at The Open meeting in November. In October, 2006, at Wexford, he rode his first treble and joined the powerful Co Durham stable of Howard Johnson in the summer of 2007. He enjoyed a great start for his new connections at the 2008 Cheltenham Festival, with Tidal Bay in the Arkle Trophy and Inglis Drever in the Ladbrokes World Hurdle, which was a third triumph in the race for the great horse. O'Regan led the Grand National field with three to jump in the 2008 renewal but his mount, Bewleys Berry, ran out of steam and ultimately finished fifth. In November, 2008, O'Regan sampled victory over the Grand National course as he partnered Black Apalachi in the Betfred Becher Chase and his major successes at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival include Killyglen in the 2009 Mildmay Novices' Chase and Tidal Bay in the 2008 Maghull Novices' Chase. O'Regan partnered Black Apalachi in both the 2009 and 2010 renewals of the Crabbie's Grand National. Unseated at the 22nd when leading the field in 2009, O'Regan enjoyed another thrilling Crabbie's Grand National ride when Black Apalachi led for much of the second circuit until headed at the last to finish second to Don't Push It in 2010. O'Regan and Johnson parted ways on April 17, 2010, when the rider's three-year retainer with the trainer's main patron Graham Wylie came to an end. He teamed up with Newmarket-based John Ferguson for the 2013/14 season and the pair enjoyed Grade One success at Chepstow in 2013 with Ruacana in the Finale Hurdle. O'Regan now rides as a freelance, lives in Gloucestershire and married Louise Grey last September. It was announced on April 7 that O'Regan would be retained by owner Barry Connell and return to live and work in Ireland. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Ballycassidy (UR 24th); 2008 Bewleys Berry (5th); 2009 Black Apalachi (UR 22nd); 2010 Black Apalachi (2nd); 2011 King Fontaine (11th); 2012 Black Apalachi (FELL 8th); 2013 Big Fella Thanks (UR 8th); 2014 Our Father (UR 8th); 2015 Al Co (UR 1st)**

## The Last Samuri (IRE) 8-10-08

**Breeding:** ch g Flemensfirth (USA) — Howaboutthis (IRE) (Oscar (IRE))

**Breeder:** Edmond Coleman

**Born:** April 18, 2008

**Owner:** Paul & Clare Rooney

**Trainer:** Kim Bailey

**Jockey:** David Bass

**Jump Form:** 21119/211U12-311

\*Officially 12lb well-in after an easy 10-length success in the Grimthorpe Chase over three and a quarter miles at Doncaster on March 5.

\*Joined Kim Bailey at the start of this season, having been previously trained by Donald McCain.

\*Excellent start for new yard, finishing third in the Listed Rehearsal Chase at Newcastle before landing a competitive three-mile handicap chase at Kempton Park over Christmas.

**Jump race record: Starts: 14; Wins: 8 2nd: 3 3rd: 1 Win & Place Prize Money: £113,942**

### Paul & Clare Rooney

**Background:** Paul Rooney, 68, is originally from London (born July, 1947) and currently spends his time between St Boswells in the Scottish borders and Sussex where he founded the Horsham-based Rooney & Co estate agents in 1981, which he now chairs. Ten years later, when he had 11 offices, he bought the south-eastern region of Prudential Property Services and formed Arun Estates. In 1993 Paul acquired Douglas Allen Spiro in East London and Essex. He moved back to the traditional trading name. Arun now trades under the brands of Ward & Partners, Cubitt & West, Douglas Allen, Pittis and Rooney & Co through over 100 branches. Paul's wealth was valued at £110 million in the 2015 Sunday Times Rich List. He decided to start his own estate agency based on his own frustrations when trying to buy a family home in Horsham. He also has a house building business. He and his wife Clare have a number of charitable foundations (the Rooney Foundation being the biggest), which focus mainly on children's disabilities and medical research. **Racing interests:** Paul and Clare, who were social racegoers, first became involved with racehorse ownership as partners in the Donald McCain-trained Danny Zuko, a four-time winner between 2007 and 2010. They bought a third of Danny Zuko for £4,000 in 2006/07 and then got the bug. Danny Zuko is now retired (2011) and lives at their home in the Scottish Borders, along with five others. They have stepped up their involvement considerably in recent seasons. Initially their horses were trained principally by Donald McCain, although they parted company with the Grand National-winning handler in a well-publicised split in October, 2015, when removing their 70 horses from the Cheshire-based trainer. The Rooneys now have 120 horses in training split among 24 different trainers and have also extended their ownership to Flat racing. Jump jockey Jason Maguire, currently injured, is their racing manager. They also own another 2016 Crabbie's Grand National contender – Khruzlinin.

**Previous Crabbie's Grand National runners: 2014 Kruzlinin (10th)**

### Kim Bailey (Thorndale Farm, Andoversford, Gloucestershire)

**Born:** May 25, 1953. **Background:** Bailey was bred for the jump game as his father Ken was a successful handler. Bailey currently trains at Thorndale Farm, Andoversford, Gloucestershire, having relocated from his native Northamptonshire in the summer of 2006, after beginning his training career at Old Manor Stables in Upper Lambourn. Following a low-profile riding career, he served as assistant to Humphrey Cottrill, Tim Forster and Fred Rimell before recording his first win as a trainer with Shifting Gold on January 7, 1978, at Sandown in the Anthony Mildmay Chase, a mere six days after taking over the reins from his father. He has trained some top-class jumpers who have rewarded him with training's highest accolades, notably the Crabbie's Grand National (Mr Frisk, 1990), Cheltenham Gold Cup (Master Oats, 1995) and Champion Hurdle (Alderbrook, 1995). His highest total of British jump winners in a season was 86 in 1993-94. **Achievements:** Bailey is only one of two current trainers to have won the Cheltenham Gold Cup, Champion Hurdle and Grand National. The other is Paul Nicholls. Mr Frisk was ridden to victory at Aintree by Marcus Armytage, the most recent amateur to win the Crabbie's Grand National. Mr Frisk's course record of 8m 47.80s still stands today. Bailey has trained four winners in total at the Cheltenham Festival, registering his first victory there for 16 years when Darna won the 2015 Brown Advisory & Merriebelle Stable Plate Handicap Chase.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1983 Menford (REF 19th); 1986 Late Night Extra (PU 11th); 1990 MR FRISK (WON); 1991 Docklands Express (FELL 1st), Mr Frisk (PU 22nd); 1992**

**Docklands Express (4th); 1994 Master Oats (FELL 13th); 1995 Romany King (6th), Master Oats (7th); 1996 Over The Stream (13th); 1997 Master Oats (5th), Glemot (UR 7th); 2000 Druid's Brook (UR 12th); 2001 Supreme Charm (UR 15th); 2002 Supreme Charm (5th); 2003 Wonder Weasel (FELL 3rd), 2004 Wonder Weasel (PU 28th); 2007 Longshanks (7th); 2012 Midnight Haze (15th); 2013 The Rainbow Hunter (UR 8th); 2014 The Rainbow Hunter (UR 9th); 2015 The Rainbow Hunter (FELL 26th)**

### **David Bass**

**Born:** June 30, 1988 **Background:** Bass grew up in Ringstead, Northamptonshire and went to Bishop Stopford School in Kettering. He hails from a musical family as his mother, Rowena, is a vicar who teaches and plays the harp and his father instructs viola and violin at schools in Northampton. His youngest sister Elizabeth also performs on the harp and was named Young Musician of the Year at the Oundle Festival of Music in 2009 at the age of 14. Bass could have followed in the family footsteps as he was a drummer with a punk band during his school days but got the racing bug after riding ponies as a youngster. He went to point-to-points with his father Philip and grandfather Albert. Following a trip to Stratford Racecourse at the age of 16, he contacted the British Racing School. After completing a course at the Newmarket-based BRS, he was given a job at Richard Phillips' yard near Stow-On-The-Wold in Gloucestershire and in 2007/08 became men's national novice point-to-point champion. Although attached to the Phillips yard, he rode his first winner under Rules for the late John Manners on Man From Highworth at Towcester in April, 2009. He joined Nicky Henderson shortly afterwards and scored on his first ride for the powerful stable when Scots Dragoon won at Sandown in November of the same year. His breakthrough success came in the Grade Three Swinton Handicap Hurdle at Haydock Park in May, 2010 when he guided Eradicate to success for owner Alan Spence. He won on Lifestyle in the conditional jockeys' handicap hurdle at the 2012 Crabbie's Grand National meeting and also tasted Cheltenham Festival success for the first time when riding Darna to victory in the 2015 Brown Advisory & Merriebelle Stables Plate. He is enjoying his best season to date, already beating his previous high of 46 achieved in 2014/15 and has struck up a fruitful partnership with Grade One winner Barthers Hill.

**Previous Crabbie's Grand National rides: 2014 Shakalakaboomboom (PU 20th); 2015 The Rainbow Hunter (FELL 26th)**

# The Romford Pele (IRE) 9-10-04

**Breeding:** b g Accordion — Back And Fore (IRE) (Bob Back (USA))

**Breeder:** Michael Dixon

**Born:** April 10, 2006

**Owner:** Trembath & Outhart

**Trainer:** Rebecca Curtis

**Jockey:** Trevor Whelan

**Form:** 2217/2211488/233246/3111-77F38

\* Six-time winner, including the Listed John Smith's Summer Cup at Uttoxeter in 2014.

\* Both runs in 2016 have been over hurdles at Cheltenham. He finished third in the Grade Two galliardhomes.com Cleeve Hurdle, 14 lengths behind Ryanair World Hurdle hero Thistlecrack and he most recently finished eighth in the Grade Three Coral Cup at the Cheltenham Festival.

**Race record: Starts: 26; Wins: 6; 2nd: 6; 3rd: 4; Win & Place Prize Money: £97,434**

## **Chris Trembath, Roy Hyde, Tony Outhart and Martin Hill**

**Background:** Former Gloucestershire county cricketer Chris Trembath (born September 27, 1961) got into racehorse ownership 15 years ago. He owns O'Faolain's Boy with his colleagues who have worked together for 20 years in public sector consultancy. After selling their businesses, they decided to buy a horse together. O'Faolain's Boy is the sixth horse in the syndicate and has been their most successful, after winning the RSA Chase at the Cheltenham Festival in 2014. Chris Trembath, who runs the various syndicates, had the greatest interest and 'persuaded the others into it.' After a chance meeting with Rebecca Curtis and her partner Gearoid Costelloe at bed and breakfast in Cheltenham, when Curtis was just starting out. Costelloe tipped two horses and Trembath promised if they won he would buy a horse with him and Curtis. After both tips won, he purchased Peckhamecho and since then Trembath and different colleagues have had about 20 horses with Curtis over the past five years and have around 12 in training with her now. Hill, Trembath and Outhart also owned Naiad Du Misselot with Ferdy Murphy, who won the 2008 Coral Cup at the Cheltenham Festival. The 54-year-old lives in and works in Bristol. He is married to Amanda and has three children. **Tony Outhart** (born September 17, 1963) is a former Scarborough FC player. Outhart started owning racehorses in 2001, with his friend Chris Trembath, who he met through their work in the public sector. He and the syndicate have all their horses in training with Rebecca Curtis. Outhart lives in Scarborough with his wife Gill and their three children.

## **No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners**

## **Rebecca Curtis (Newport, Pembrokeshire)**

Curtis, who was born on April 1, 1980, grew up on Fforest Farm five miles from Fishguard on the Pembrokeshire coast, a place that has now become her training centre. She has been around horses all her life and started riding aged four, progressing to showjump for the Welsh junior team. She rode in point-to-points and her first job in racing was with nearby trainer Peter Bowen. She spent five years in America with trainers Richard Mandela and Dan Hendricks before coming home to take out a licence in 2008. Her first winner was Mango Catcher at Chepstow on April 5 that year and her reputation has steadily grown in the intervening years. She enjoyed a first Cheltenham Festival winner in 2012 when Teaforthree won the National Hunt Chase and a second when At Fishers Cross took the 2013 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle to give her a first Grade One victory, swiftly followed by a second at Aintree in the Doom Bar Sefton Novices' Hurdle. She has enjoyed four winners at the Cheltenham Festival in all and had a tremendous first experience of the Crabbie's Grand National, with Teaforthree finishing third in 2013. Curtis is assisted by her partner, bloodstock agent Gearoid Costelloe, and she uses her family's private beach to exercise her horses. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2013 Teaforthree (3rd); 2014 Teaforthree (UR 15th); 2015 Bob Ford (PU 29th)**

## **Trevor Whelan**

**Born:** Dungarvan, April 7, 1989 **Background:** Whelan rode ponies from a very young age and when he was 16 went to the Irish racing school in Kildare. After completing the course, Whelan moved to Pat Flynn's Waterford yard. Shortly afterwards, he moved to England to work for Ian Williams and George Baker. In 2011 he joined Neil King's yard. In 2013, Whelan won the At The Races award for Jump Ride of the Year for his ride on Persian Herald in a novices' handicap Hurdle at Fakenham. He lost his claim in November, 2015. His biggest win came for Neil King when he partnered Lil Rockerfeller to win the Grade Two totepool National Spirit Hurdle at Fontwell in February. This is his first ride over the National fences. **Family:** Married to Samantha, whom he met while working for Ian Williams. **No previous Crabbie's Grand National rides**

## Triolo D'Alene (FR) 9-11-00

**Breeding:** ch g Epalo (GER) — Joliette D'Alene (FR) (Garde Royale)

**Breeder:** Louis Couteaudier

**Born:** May 8, 2007

**Owner:** Sandy & Caroline Orr

**Trainer:** Nicky Henderson

**Jockey:** Jeremiah McGrath

**Form:** 4541110/2P381/1310P/P3-15

\*Won twice over fences in France for trainer Marcel Rolland before being sold privately in December, 2011.

\*Hit the limelight for current connections in April, 2013, when the ready winner of the Grade Three Crabbie's Topham Chase over the famous Grand National fences at Aintree and two miles, five and a half furlongs.

\*Won the 2013 Hennessy Gold Cup over an extended three and a quarter miles by two and three quarter lengths from Rocky Creek at Newbury.

\*Disappointed when pulled-up in 2014 Crabbie's Grand National and restricted to just two outings in 2014/15 season.

\*Back to form on seasonal reappearance with victory in Listed chase over an extended two and a half miles at Kempton Park in January but only a distant fifth last time out behind Silviniaco Conti in Grade One Betfair Ascot Chase on February 20.

**Jump race record: Starts: 21; Wins: 7; 2nd: 1; 3rd 3; Win & Place Prize Money: £257,626**

### **Sandy & Caroline Orr**

**Sandy Orr – Born:** Oban in June, 1939 **Background:** Educated at Loretto School in Musselburgh, he studied arts and law at Edinburgh University, where he captained the cricket team. Has homes in Perthshire, Edinburgh and Chelsea. He received an OBE in the 2006 Birthday Honours for services to hospitality. His hobbies include cricket, yachting and the arts. Orr is a solicitor who has served as a director and investor in myriad different companies in sectors including hotels, restaurants, breweries, banks, radio, property, nursing homes and finance. He qualified as a solicitor in 1962 and spent first 13 years working in Oban as senior partner in MacArthur, Stewart & Orr, where his work included acting for leisure clients. In 1983, he joined forces with financier Donald MacDonald and began his involvement in hotels and leisure facilities, via MacDonald Orr, initially raising funds for the likes of SECC and the Sheraton Hotel in Edinburgh. With son David and McDonald, he started City Inn Hotels in 1995 which became Mint Hotels in 2010. The company was sold to Hilton Hotels for £600 million in September, 2011. He has been a director of Caledonian Bank since 1992. He is the founding director of Macdonald Hotels and Edinburgh's Caledonian Brewery. He was also the chairman of Scottish Opera between 1992 and 1999, the chairman of Radio Forth between 1989 and 1997, a non-executive independent director of Scottish Radio Holdings PLC between 1991 and 2005, and chairman of Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith between 2002 and 2012. He is also a former director of the Scottish Arts Council and a founder of Edinburgh Festival Theatre. He has also been a donor to the Scottish National Party. **Racing interests:** From 2004, the Orrs had horses with Len Lungo but following that trainer's retirement, they were sent to Nicky Henderson. Their good horses include hurdler Shernando, Theinval (who captured a Grade Three handicap hurdle at the 2015 Crabbie's Grand National Festival) and Triolo D'Alene who won the 2013 Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2014 Triolo D'Alene (PU 22nd)**

## **Nicky Henderson**

**Born** - Lambeth, London, on December 10, 1950 **Background** - The son of financier and amateur jockey John Henderson MBE, who founded Racecourse Holdings Trust, the forerunner for Jockey Club Racecourses, he was educated at Eton and the Royal Agricultural College. He worked for stockbrokers Cazenove in London and Australia, where he gained experience riding work at Randwick, before devoting himself full-time to racing. Henderson first made his name in Britain as an amateur rider, finishing runner-up three times in the non-professional championship. His main wins as a jockey came on Happy Warrior in the 1977 Fox Hunters Chase at Aintree and on Acquaint in Sandown's Imperial Cup in the same year. Henderson recorded his 78th and final win on Rolls Rambler in the Horse & Hound Cup at Stratford in June, 1978. He became assistant trainer to Fred Winter in 1974 and received his own training licence in July, 1978, taking over from Roger Charlton at Windsor House Stables in Lambourn, Berkshire. He moved to Seven Barrows, to the north of the village, in 1992, after swapping yards with Peter Walwyn. One of Britain's leading Jump trainers, Henderson has sent out over 2,500 winners and been at the top of his profession since 1985. His unprecedented tally of 55 wins at The Festival includes a joint record five Stan James Champion Hurdles, six JCB Triumph Hurdles, five Racing Post Arkle Chases, two Timico Cheltenham Gold Cups, four Betway Queen Mother Champion Chases, two Ryanair World Hurdles and two Ryanair Chases. **First Winner As A Trainer** - Dukery at Uttoxeter, October 14, 1978. **Accolades:** Nicky Henderson is the all-time leading trainer at The Festival with 55 successes. He has won the Jump trainers' championship three times - 1985/86, 1986/87 and 2012/2013.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1979 Zongalero (2nd); 1980 Zongalero (Refused 20th); 1981 Zongalero (FELL 22nd); 1982 Sun Lion (FELL 3rd); 1983 Spartan Missile (UR 22nd); 1984 Spartan Missile (16th); 1985 Classified (5th); 1986 Classified (3rd), The Tsarevich (7th); 1987 The Tsarevich (2nd), Classified (UR 25th); 1988 The Tsarevich (7th); 1990 Brown Windsor (4th); 1991 Ten Of Spades (14th); 1991 Master Bob (PU bef 19th); 1992 Brown Windsor (FELL 6th); 1994 Henry Mann (FELL 1st); 1995 Tinryland (FELL 1st); 1998 Pashto (FELL 1st); 1999 Fiddling The Facts (FELL 22nd); 2000 Esprit De Cotte (FELL 22nd); 2001 Esprit De Cotte (UR 11th), 2002 Marlborough (FELL 1st), Goguenard (FELL 1st); 2003 Katarino (UR 15th); 2005 Fondmort (PU 28th); 2006 Juveigneur (FELL 1st), Iris Royal (PU bef 17th), 2007 Liberthine (5th); 2009 Golden Flight (FELL 1st); Fleet Street (UR 18th); 2012 Shakalakaboomboom (9th); 2013 Roberto Goldback (UR last); 2014 Hunt Ball (17th), Long Run (FELL 9th), Shakalakaboom (PU 20th) Triolo D'Alene (PU 22nd)**

## **Jeremiah McGrath**

**Born:** County Cork, December 10, 1991, **Background:** McGrath was riding ponies from a very early age. His family were involved in horses but mainly in show jumping and eventing. He was a member of the Muskerry Pony Club. At the age of 15, he left school and gained a place at the Irish apprentice school, where he did his placement with Irish handler Dermot Weld. After being persuaded by his mother, who is a teacher, he returned to school to sit his Leaving Certificate. During the holidays, McGrath spent some time with Irish trainer Gerry Cully and Brenden Powell in England. He rode his first winner for Powell on Bathwick Quest in a bumper at Newton Abbot on August 20, 2008. When he finished school, he went back to work for Lambourn-based Powell for a year, before landing a job at nearby Seven Barrows as Nicky Henderson's conditional. **Big-Race Success:** His first big win came in the Grade Three Swinton Hurdle at Haydock Park in 2011 and, in 2012, he rode Une Artiste to take the Grade Three Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival. In 2015, he won the Grade Three Alder Hey Children's Charity Handicap Hurdle at Aintree on Theinval for owners Sandy and Caroline Orr, for whom he rides Triolo D'Alene for in the Crabbie's Grand National on Saturday. He lives in Wantage.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National rides**

## Ucello Conti (FR) 8-10-8

**Breeding:** b g Martaline – Gazelle Lulu (Altayan)

**Breeder:** Patrick Joubert

**Born:** June 4, 2008

**Owner:** Simon Munir & Isaac Souede

**Trainer:** Gordon Elliott

**Jockey:** Daryl Jacob

**Form:** 111142F11226/5312P/69/1P-623

\*Was bred in the central Allier department in France by arable farmer Patrick Joubert, from a mare he bought out of training over dinner in a local brasserie. Is a two-year younger half-brother to another Grand National runner in Silviniaco Conti. After a gap of a century, French-breds have won three of the past seven runnings.

\*Has only won in his native France, where he started his career with four straight wins. Made the transfer to his current trainer a year ago.

\*Has raced three times in Ireland, improving each time with a step up in distance. On heavy ground at Leopardstown in December he was caught close home in a three-mile Grade B handicap and in January at Gowran, again on heavy, took third in the prestigious Thyestes Chase.

\*Has never fallen or unseated and, judging by his form in France, should appreciate better ground.

**Race record: Starts 24; Wins 8; 2nd 5; 3rd 2. Win & Place Prize Money: £291,465**

### Simon Munir & Isaac Souede

Simon Munir was born in October, 1964, and educated at Harrow, where trainer William Haggas was a friend. He lives in Hertfordshire. He hoped to play for Arsenal when younger and is still an enthusiastic supporter of the team, with a box at the Emirates Stadium. The CEO of Galaxy Asset Management, he previously worked for Merrill Lynch, based in Geneva for 10 years, and then ran its Monaco operation. Also owns Galaxy Sports Management. His first horse was No Speeches, owned in partnership with four colleagues, and a winner on the Flat for them at Lingfield in 1996 when trained by Simon Dow. He sponsored Jack Berry's yard and has had horses with Haggas and Sir Mark Prescott before upping his involvement in Jump racing. In recent years, Munir has owned horses in partnership with Isaac Souede. The American is chairman and chief investment strategist of the Permal Group, which manages assets totalling around \$21 billion. He was educated at the State University of New York and the University of Michigan. The pair have invested heavily in young horses, mostly bought by their racing manager Anthony Bromley of Highflyer Bloodstock – they owned the first two home (Peace And Co and Top Notch) in the JCB Triumph Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival in 2015. They have horses with Nicky Henderson, Alan King, Nigel Twiston-Davies, David Pipe and Oliver Sherwood in Britain, and Willie Mullins and Gordon Elliott in Ireland. Twiston-Davies secured them Grade One success this season with Bristol De Mai, who took the Scilly Isles Novices' Chase at Sandown in February. They have a sizeable team of horses in France, principally with Guillaume Macaire, Guy Cherele, Jacques Ortet, Yannick Fouin and Guy Henrot. Munir owned Roberto Goldback, who unseated his rider at the final fence in the 2013 Grand National, and tasted success over Aintree's unique fences when Ma Filleule took the 2014 Crabbie's Topham Chase. They retain Daryl Jacob as their jockey.

**Crabbie's Grand National record: 2013 Roberto Goldback (UR 30th – owned by Simon Munir)**

### Gordon Elliott IRE (Trim, County Meath)

**Born:** March 2, 1978, in Summerhill, Co Meath **Background:** Gordon Elliott was a successful point-to-point rider, who also partnered winners under Rules. He started his racing career while still at school, working at Tony Martin's stable in County Meath. From there, he moved to Britain, joining Martin Pipe in 2002, and during his spell in Somerset his six rides as an amateur included one winner. Elliott then returned to Ireland for another term at Martin's stables. **Training Career:** In 2004, Barry Callaghan bought Capranny Stables at Trim in County Meath. When Elliott started his training career, early in 2006, those stables became his base, although he moved to a new yard at nearby Longwood in October, 2012. Elliott's first runner under Rules came at the 2006 Cheltenham Festival, when Brandon Mountain was pulled up in the Fred Winter Juvenile Novices' Handicap Hurdle. He continued to send runners over to the UK and enjoyed almost instant success, most notably with Arresting, who notched up four victories between May and July, 2006. Elliott's Grand National victory with Silver Birch in 2007 was remarkable not only because he was just 29 at the time, but also because he had yet to saddle a winner in his native country. The winners in Ireland soon followed and Elliott recorded an initial Grade One victory with Jessies Dream in the Drinmore Novice Chase in December, 2010, and celebrated his first Cheltenham Festival successes in 2011 with Chicago Grey in the National Hunt Chase and Carlito Brigante in the Coral Cup. His Cheltenham Festival haul now stands at eight, and this year he won the Timico Cheltenham

Gold Cup with Don Cossack, who took the Grade One JLT Melling Chase at the 2015 Crabbie's Grand National meeting. Other good performers for Elliott in recent years have been the multiple winners No More Heroes, Prince Of Scars, Roi Du Mee, Tiger Roll and Clarcam, who have all scored at the highest level. This season has been his most successful to date, with 119 winners as of April 6. The trainer has also enjoyed a major Flat victory with Dirar in the 2010 Ebor at York.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 SILVER BIRCH (WON); 2009 Silver Birch (FELL 22nd); 2010 Backstage (UR 20th); 2011 Backstage (10th); 2012 Tharawaat (8th), Chicago Grey (BD 5th); 2013 Tarquinius 8th, Chicago Grey (PU 30th); 2015 Cause Of Causes (8th)**

### **Daryl Jacob**

**Born:** August 28, 1983, in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford, **Background:** the son of a fisherman, Jacob initially attended the Racing School in Kildare and then spent two years with Dessie Hughes before having a summer riding out Flat horses with Richard Hannon in Wiltshire. He then joined Robert and Sally Alner's Dorset stable and rode their point-to-pointers, and after a season with Paul Keane returned to the Alners in the summer of 2006. He enjoyed a fantastic 2006/07 season, highlighted by success on The Listener in the Grade One Lexus Chase at Leopardstown in December, 2007, his first victory in his homeland since he switched to Britain in 2003. During his time with Hughes, he became very friendly with Kieran Kelly, who died in a fall in 2003, and Daryl dedicated his Lexus triumph to Kieran, who was instrumental in encouraging him to make the move to England. It was the decision of owner Ray Humphreys to give the ride on The Listener to Jacob, having "jocked off" Andrew Thornton, and the partnership flourished in the 2007/08 season, with further Grade One victories in the John Durkan Chase at Punchestown and the Irish Gold Cup at Leopardstown. Daryl enjoyed a dream 48 hours at the end of 2009, as he partnered the Nick Williams-trained Me Voici to victory in the Grade One Future Champions Finale Juvenile Hurdle at Chepstow on December 27 and landed the Grade One Challow Novices' Hurdle at Newbury two days later on Reve De Sivola, also for Williams. On his first start in the Crabbie's Grand National in 2007, Daryl finished a gallant fourth on Philson Run, and the jockey has been successful over the famous fences with I Hear Thunder, who triumphed in the 2006 Grand Sefton Chase. He enjoyed aboard the Williams-trained Diamond Harry in the 2010 Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury and also gained the first of two Cheltenham Festival winners in the 2011 JCB Triumph Hurdle with Zarkandar for Paul Nicholls. The biggest victory of his career came in the 2012 Crabbie's Grand National when he came with a great late run on Neptune Collonges to score by a nose from Sunnyhillboy, the closest ever verdict in the race. Jacob was appointed stable jockey to Nicholls in the summer of 2013 but was ousted from the job after just a year. He is now retained by owners Simon Munir & Isaac Souede. He has enjoyed a successful association with the Nigel Twiston-Davies-trained Bristol De Mai for his retained owners this season, winning the Grade One Betfred TV Scilly Isles Chase at Sandown and finishing second in the JLT Novices' Chase at the Cheltenham Festival.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Philson Run (4th); 2008 Philson Run (UR 8th); 2010 Maljimar (FELL 22nd); 2011 What A Friend (PU 27th); 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2013 Join Together (12th); 2015 Pineau De Re (12th)**

## Unioniste (FR) 8-10-08

**Breeding:** gr g Dom Alco (FR) - Gleep Will (FR) (Cadoudal (FR))

**Breeder:** Haras De Saint-Voir Et Al

**Born:** February 28, 2008

**Owner:** John Hales

**Trainer:** Paul Nicholls

**Jockey:** Nick Scholfield

**Form:** 2422165/113114/31838/613F8-80312

\*Fancied for last year's renewal but got no further than the fifth fence.

\*Has won six of 20 starts over fences for current connections, most recently taking the Ivan Straker Memorial Chase at Kelso in February.

\*Last seen out at the same course when the staying-on 10-length runner-up to Many Clouds in the Listed Premier Chase on March 13.

\*Trainer and owner combined to win the Crabbie's Grand National with another grey, Neptune Collonges, by a nose in 2012.

\*Half-brother My Will finished third to Mom Mome in the 2009 Crabbie's Grand National.

\*The most recent of three greys to win was Neptune Collonges in 2012. Before that were Nicolaus Silver (1961) and The Lamb (1868 & 1871).

**Jump race record: Starts: 28; Wins: 7; 2nd: 3; 3rd: 4; Win & Place Prize Money: £213,981**

### John Hales

John Hales is a successful businessman in the toy trade and hit the jackpot in making Teletubbies dolls. He formed Golden Bear Products in 1979 with Christine Nicholls and the company, which has its headquarters in Telford, Shropshire, is one of the UK's leading manufacturers of quality and reliable toy products. Hales, who was previously managing director of Chad Valley Toys, is chairman of Golden Bear Products, which produced soft toys of Wenlock, Mandeville and Pride the Lion - the official mascots of the London 2012 Olympic Games, the Paralympics and Team GB. The company has developed a new line of toys based on the CBeebies series Twirlywoos. In the horseracing world, Hales is a successful owner and One Man, one of the most popular chasers, carried his colours with distinction and won 17 races for him. Tragically he sustained a fatal injury in the Melling Chase over the Mildmay Course at Aintree in 1998. Trained for him by Gordon Richards, the grey had provided him with some unforgettable memories, winning the King George VI Chase twice, the Hennessy Gold Cup and the Queen Mother Champion Chase. Hales may have felt one success in that latter race was as much as could be asked, but along came the Paul Nicholls-trained Azertyuiop to win the contest again in 2004, having taken the Arkle Trophy in 2003. Other good horses he has had in recent years include Cheltenham Festival winners Noland (2006), Al Ferof (2011) and Aux Ptits Soins (2015). His biggest success came in the 2012 Crabbie's Grand National when Neptune Collonges took the honours in the closest finish ever to the great chase, finishing a nose ahead and becoming the first grey to triumph since 1961. Another grey, Al Ferof, has also been a star for the owner, winning two Grade Ones and four Grade Twos. Hales has also tasted success with top-class show jumper Arko, ridden by Nick Skelton, whose son Dan also trains for him. The owner's daughter Lisa runs Shaw Farm Stud in Shropshire, one of the UK's leading breeding operations for equestrian sport horses, and Neptune Collonges retired there and took up dressage. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2015 Unioniste (FELL 5th)**

### Paul Nicholls (Manor Farm Stables, Ditcheat, Shepton Mallet, Somerset)

**Born:** April 17, 1962 at Lydney, Gloucestershire **Background:** The son of a policeman, he grew up in Olveston. Started out in point-to-points after leaving school at 16 and worked for a couple of yards before becoming a conditional jockey with Josh Gifford for two years and then joining Devon trainer David Barons. He partnered 119 winners between 1980 and 1989, with his biggest British successes coming in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury on Broadheath (1986) and Playschool (1987). He struggled to keep his weight down and gave up race riding. Between 1989 and 1991, he was assistant trainer to Barons, who trained Broadheath and Playschool and sent out Seagram to win the 1991 Grand National. Has been training at Manor Farm Stables in Ditcheat, Somerset, since taking out a licence on November 1, 1991. Started out with eight horses. The facilities have kept on being improved. His daughter Megan is an apprentice jockey with trainer Richard Hannon. **Achievements:** Nine-time champion Jump trainer (2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2013/14, 2014/15) and became the first handler to accrue more than £4 million in a season in 2007/08. He gained his 2,000th winner at Down Royal on November 5, 2011, less than 20 years after taking his licence, making him the fastest Jump trainer to reach the landmark figure. Has sent out 40 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and is

the jointly-third most successful trainer there. His successes there include four victories or more in three of the meeting's showpiece contests - the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (1999 Call Equiname, 2004 Azertyuiop, 2008 & 2009 Master Minded, 2015 Dodging Bullets), the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup (1999 See More Business, 2007 & 2009 Kauto Star, 2008 Denman) and the Ryanair World Hurdle (Big Buck's 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012). He also won the Stan James Champion Hurdle with Rock On Ruby in 2012. At Aintree, he captured the Crabbie's Grand National with Neptune Collonges in 2012 and sent out Big Buck's for four consecutive victories (2009 to 2012) in the race which is now the Grade One Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle. He saddled Silviniaco Conti to win the Grade One Betfred Bowl in 2014 and 2015. He has been leading trainer at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival three times - in 2008, 2011 & 2015.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1992 Just So (6th); 1996 Vicompt De Valmont (10th), Deep Bramble (PU 29th), Brackenfield (UR 19th); 1997 Straight Talk (Fell 14th); 1998 What A Hand (Fell 1st), Court Melody (Fell 6th), General Crack (PU 11th); 1999 Strong Chairman (15th), Double Thriller (Fell 1st); 2000 Earthmover (Fell 4th), Torduff Express (Fell 13th), Flaked Oats (Fell 20th), Escartefigue (UR 30th); 2001 Earthmover (Fell 4th); 2002 Murt's Man (PU 17th), Ad Hoc (BD 27th); 2003 Montifault (5th), Fadalko (UR 6th), Ad Hoc (UR 19th), Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd), Torduff Express (UR 27th); 2004 Exit To Wave (PU 9th); 2005 Royal Auclair (2nd), Heros Collonges (8th), L'Aventure (15th), Ad Hoc (Fell 22nd); 2006 Royal Auclair (Fell 1st), Le Duc (UR 8th), Silver Birch (Fell 15th), Heros Collonges (UR 15th), Le Roi Miguel (PU 19th), Cornish Rebel (PU 19th); 2007 Le Duc (UR 6th), Royal Auclair (Fell 9th), Eurotrek (PU bef 22nd), Thisthatandtother (PU 30th); 2008 Cornish Sett (12th), Turko (Fell 25th), Mr Pointment (PU 30th); 2009 My Will (3rd), Big Fella Thanks (6th), Cornish Sett (17th), Eurotrek (PU 17th); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th), Tricky Trickster (9th), My Will (Fell 4th), Nozic (UR 20th); 2011 Niche Market (5th), Ornaïs (Fell 4th), The Tother One (Fell 6th), What A Friend (PU 27th); 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2013 Join Together (12th), What A Friend (PU 19th), Harry The Viking (PU 26th); 2014 Rocky Creek (5th), Hawkes Point (18th), Tidal Bay (UR 8th); 2015 Mon Parrain (11th), Rocky Creek (17th), Rebel Rebellion (PU 26th), Unioniste (FELL 5th)**

### **Nick Scholfield**

**Born:** June 25, 1989 **Background:** son of British champion point-to-point rider Philip Scholfield. Brought up riding ponies in his native Devon and went to the Horse of the Year Show and the Royal International to show Chiddock Over The Limit at the age of 15. He always wanted to be a jockey – his first mount under Rules was also his first winner, Lou Du Moulin Mas, in an amateur riders' event at Newbury in November, 2006. By the end of his first season, Scholfield had ridden six winners from just 14 rides under Rules, and had gained the national novice riders' title in point-to-points with a record 25 winners. His impressive strike-rate continued into the 2007/08 season as, backed by the powerful Somerset stable of Paul Nicholls, he became champion amateur with 20 victories to his name. Decided to turn professional immediately after the 2007/08 campaign and enjoyed success with his first ride as a paid jockey aboard Double The Trouble at Towcester on April 28, 2008. Scholfield was appointed as retained jockey to the Andy Turnell stable in April, 2009. He was second behind Rhys Flint in the conditional jockeys' championship in 2009/2010, going down by four wins in a tight battle for the title. He struck up a burgeoning partnership in the 2013/14 season with Melodic Rendezvous, whom he guided to victory in the Grade One Tolworth Hurdle at Sandown. He tasted Grade One glory last season when partnering Irving to victory in the Fighting Fifth Hurdle at Newcastle and has ridden two winners at the Cheltenham Festival – Hunt Ball and Qualando.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2008 Cornish Sett (12th); 2009 Cornish Sett (17th); 2010 My Will (FELL 4th); 2011 Ornaïs (FELL 4th); 2013 Teaforthree (3rd); 2014 Teaforthree (UR 15th); 2015 Spring Heeled (14th)**

## Vics Canvas (IRE) 13-10-6

**Breeding:** b g Old Vic – Oilpainting (Welsh Term)

**Breeder:** Paul McNamee

**Born:** April 12, 2003

**Owner:** Bodeen Bandits Partnership

**Trainer:** Dermot McLaughlin

**Jockey:** Robert Dunne

**Form:** 4132219/412U4/96180F0/54213F2-85P6

\*His sire Old Vic has an outstanding Grand National record, with winners Comply Or Die and Don't Push It (both also placed) and two runners-up in Black Apalachi and Sunnyhillboy.

\*Bought as a four-year-old for just €9,000. Of this year's runners only last year's hero Many Clouds (£6,000) cost less at auction.

\*Won twice in the point-to-point field and has scored five victories under Rules. Most unusually, he did not start his chasing career until he was 11.

\*Already has a Grand National to his credit – the Cork version, over three and a half miles, in November 2014, his sole success over fences on only his fourth start over the larger obstacles. Came close to another feature staying prize when second to Just A Par in last year's Bet365 Gold Cup.

\*His only two falls under Rules have come at the first in high-profile contests – in the Pertemps Final at Cheltenham two years ago and in last year's Irish Grand National.

\*Is the oldest runner in the this year's National – the last 13-year-old to win was Sergeant Murphy in 1923.

**Race record: Starts 31; Wins 5; 2nd 5; 3rd 2. Win & Place Prize Money: £122,351.**

### Bodeen Bandits Partnership

This three-man syndicate consists of Gary O'Brien (At The Races presenter, Irish point-to-point commentator, Grand National commentator for BBC Radio 5 Live), his college friend David Eiffe and Patsy Kelly. David owns the Lee Valley Training Centre – gallops and schooling grounds in Co Meath – and is involved in bloodstock. Patsy Kelly works in the construction business.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners**

### Dermot McLoughlin

**Born:** April 1, 1974. **Background:** Dermot's father Liam was a jockey, and rode in the Crabbie's Grand National twice. Liam won the Irish Grand National in 1962 on Kerfora, and was the first man to win on the great Arkle. Dermot rode around 20 winners, mostly for Jim Dreaper, and then started breaking-in and pre-training horses. He took out a dual-purpose training licence in 2011, and has around 30 horses in his yard at Ratoath, Co Meath. He and his wife Gillian have two children, Finn and Ella. Vics Canvas, his Crabbie's Grand National runner, gave him his biggest win to date in the 2014 Cork Grand National, and finished second in the Bet365 Gold Cup at Sandown in 2015.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners**

### Robert Dunne

**Born:** Dublin, April 5, 1985 **Background:** Robbie's family are not involved in horses, and he didn't sit on a horse until he was 14. After graduating from RACE, the Irish jockeys' school on the Curragh, he worked for Dermot Weld for two years and then Jim Bolger. He didn't get off the mark on the racecourse until his 176th ride – Maswaly at Downpatrick in 2005. In 2010 he moved to England to work for Venetia Williams. He is now freelance, and rides primarily for Williams, Dai Burchell and Dan Skelton. He lives in Alcester with girlfriend Sophie Wilde. His biggest winners to date have been the 2015 Coral Scottish Grand National on Wayward Prince for Hilary Parrott, and the Venetia Williams-trained Rigadin Du Beauchene in both Warwick's Betfred Classic Chase in 2013 and the 2014 Betfred Grand National Trial at Haydock.

**No previous Crabbie's Grand National rides**

# Vieux Lion Rouge (FR) 7-10-05

**Breeding:** ch g Sabiango (GER) — Indecise (FR) (Cyborg (FR))

**Breeder:** F M Cottin

**Born:** March 2, 2009

**Owner:** Prof Caroline Tisdall & John Gent

**Trainer:** David Pipe

**Jockey:** James Reveley

**Form:** 1110/11103/390-111U26

\*Won a handicap chase at by four lengths at Haydock earlier in the season, which was his ninth win.

\*Last seen finishing sixth in the Listed National Hunt Chase at The Festival.

\*If he were to land the Crabbie's Grand National he would be the first seven-year-old to win since Bogskar in 1940.

**Race record: Starts 18; Wins 9; 2nd 1; 3rd 2. Win & Place Prize Money: £63,578**

## Prof Caroline Tisdall and John Gent

Prof Tisdall first started owning National Hunt horses in 2010 with David Pipe on the recommendation of Sir Mark Prescott, whom she had met through her position on the board of the Countryside Alliance. An art historian, Prof Tisdall was the Guardian's art critic in the 1970s, and has written many books on art and other subjects. She is involved in conservation projects in Britain and Africa. John Gent founded Gent Transport and Warehousing in 1974, and has been joined in the business by his three sons, Chris, Rob and Dave. He has been involved in racehorse ownership for 20 years, and has horses with Gary Moore and Richard Phillips as well as David Pipe. He lives in Clevedon, Somerset. Vieux Lion Rouge is his first runner in the Crabbie's Grand National.

## No previous Crabbie's Grand National runners

## David Pipe (Nicholashayne, Somerset)

**Born:** February 7, 1973 **Background:** Son of 15-time champion Jump trainer Martin Pipe, who in 2001 had 10 runners in the Crabbie's Grand National. He started riding in point-to-points in 1992, going on to gain 22 wins over the next five seasons, plus two under Rules, which included victory aboard Bonanza Boy in the Ludlow Gold Cup. After finishing as a rider, he had spells with Michael Dickinson in the US, Criquette Head-Maarek in France and Joey Ramsden in South Africa, before setting up as a point-to-point trainer, handling Horus, Lord Atterbury and Celestial Gold. Based at Purchas Farm, a mile away from his father's Pond House, he sent out 164 point-to-point winners over six seasons, including Well Armed, successful 15 times. He picked up the reins at Nicholashayne after his father retired in 2006 and promptly won with the first runner under his own name, Standin Obligation, at Kelso on May 9, 2006 and less than two years later emulated his father's 1994 Grand National victory with Miinnehomia when he saddled Comply Or Die to take the great Aintree race. Comply Or Die finished second in the following year's Grand National. His 10 Grade One victories include Un Temps Pour Tout (2015 French Champion Hurdle), Dynaste (2014 Ryanair Chase) and Moon Racer (2015 Champion Bumper), while he has accumulated 14 Cheltenham Festival successes including one this year. His best British season came in 2006/7 with 134 winners, while he enjoyed 116 successes in 2014/15. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2007 Puntal (8th), Celtic Son (PU 22nd); 2008 COMPLY OR DIE (WON), Milan Deux Mille (15th), Madison Du Berlais (FELL 8th), Vodka Bleu (PU 19th), Joaaci (FELL 20th); 2009 Comply Or Die (2nd), Arteea (10th); 2010 Comply Or Die (12th), Piraya (13th), Pablo Du Charmil (Fell 2nd), Madison Du Berlais (FELL 19th), The Package (UR 19th); 2011 Piraya (19th), Or Noir De Somoza (FELL 6th), Comply Or Die (PU 29th); 2012 Swing Bill (10th), Junior (FELL 2nd); 2013 Swing Bill (6th); 2014 Swing Bill (9th), The Package (12th), Our Father (UR 8th); 2015 Soll (9th)**

## James Reveley

**Born:** March 10, 1989. **Background:** Is the son of successful trainer Keith and grandson of prolific all-purpose handler Mary. He grew up on the family's Saltburn farm, and started his competitive life show jumping on ponies, becoming national junior champion aged 12. He started riding under rules when he was 16 and won fifth time out, on Time Marches On at Plumpton in May 2005. He turned professional in October that year, riding for his father. He had several rides on the Flat but concentrated on Jump racing and had his first significant success on Clouding Over in a valuable mares' hurdle at Southwell in January 2007. He won over the Grand National fences at his first attempt, on Endless Power in the 2009 Grand Sefton Chase and the same year won the Scottish Borders National at Kelso on Rambling Minster. He spent the summer of 2007 riding for leading French trainer Guillaume Macaire, for whom he scored at Grade One level at Merano, Italy, in 2010 on Rigoureux and has maintained the French connection since, with several prestigious Auteuil victories including last year's Grade One Grande Course de Haies d'Auteuil aboard Un Temps Pour Tout for David Pipe and, in November 2015, the Grade One Prix Maurice Gillois with So French for Macaire. He finished fourth in the French jockeys' title last season with over 50 successes there. **Crabbie's Grand National record: 2009 Rambling Minster (PU 19th); 2011 That's Rhythm (FELL 1st); 2012 Always Right (UR 15th); 2015 Night In Milan (18th)**

## Wonderful Charm (FR) 8-11-03

**Breeding:** b g Poliglote — Victoria Royale (FR) (Garde Royale)

**Breeder:** Jean-Philippe Dubois

**Born:** May 18, 2008

**Owner:** Robin Geffen

**Trainer:** Paul Nicholls

**Jockey:** Sam Twiston-Davies

**Jump Form:** 442512/18/111253/123783P-2

\*Best recent run came at last year's Crabbie's Grand National Festival when a close third in the Listed Betfred Handicap Chase over three miles and a furlong of the Mildmay Course.

\*Only start this season saw him finish a well-beaten second behind Aachen in the Grade Three Ryman Stationery Handicap Chase at Cheltenham in December.

\*Landed a pair of Grade Two novices' chases over two and a half miles at Wincanton and Newbury in November 2013.

**Jump race record: Starts: 22; Wins: 6; 2nd: 5; 3rd: 3; Win & Place Prize Money: £201,560**

### Robin Geffen

**Background:** Geffen is the founder of Neptune Investment Management, a major race sponsor. He had long been involved in syndicate ownership before paying 280,000 guineas for the Evan Williams-trained Fiulin at Tattersalls in October, 2009, His aim is to buy Flat horses with potential as hurdlers. Born in London in 1957, he went to Rugby School and graduated with a degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from Keble College, Oxford in 1979. He joined Charterhouse J. Rothschild as a graduate trainee and his career progressed through moves to Eagle Star, York Trust, Scottish Equitable and Orbitex Investments Limited, where he served as Chief Investment Officer from 1997. In 2002, while all around him were setting up hedge funds, Geffen established Neptune Investment Management in Hammersmith, a long-only fund management business. Geffen, who lives in south west London, is also a keen real tennis and racquets player. **Racing Interests:** Geffen has enjoyed success both on the Flat and over Jumps, most notably with Arctic Cosmos, winner of the 2010 St Leger. He also won the Royal Hunt Cup in 2015 with GM Hopkins, while his best Jump performers have been Wonderful Charm and Kauto Star's half-brother Kauto Stone, a Grade One and multiple Grade Two scorer.

**Previous Crabbie's Grand National runners: None**

### Paul Nicholls (Manor Farm Stables, Ditcheat, Shepton Mallet, Somerset)

**Born:** April 17, 1962 at Lydney, Gloucestershire **Background:** The son of a policeman, he grew up in Olveston. Started out in point-to-points after leaving school at 16 and worked for a couple of yards before becoming a conditional jockey with Josh Gifford for two years and then joining Devon trainer David Barons. He partnered 119 winners between 1980 and 1989, with his biggest British successes coming in the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury on Broadheath (1986) and Playschool (1987). He struggled to keep his weight down and gave up race riding. Between 1989 and 1991, he was assistant trainer to Barons, who trained Broadheath and Playschool and sent out Seagram to win the 1991 Grand National. Has been training at Manor Farm Stables in Ditcheat, Somerset, since taking out a licence on November 1, 1991. Started out with eight horses. The facilities have kept on being improved. His daughter Megan is an apprentice jockey with trainer Richard Hannon. **Achievements:** Nine-time champion Jump trainer (2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2013/14, 2014/15) and became the first handler to accrue more than £4 million in a season in 2007/08. He gained his 2,000th winner at Down Royal on November 5, 2011, less than 20 years after taking his licence, making him the fastest Jump trainer to reach the landmark figure. Has sent out 40 winners at the Cheltenham Festival and is the jointly-third most successful trainer there. His successes there include four victories or more in three of the meeting's showpiece contests - the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (1999 Call Equiname, 2004 Azertyuiop, 2008 & 2009 Master Minded, 2015 Dodging Bullets), the Timico Cheltenham Gold Cup (1999 See More Business, 2007 & 2009 Kauto Star, 2008 Denman) and the Ryanair World Hurdle (Big Buck's 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012). He also won the Stan James Champion Hurdle with Rock On Ruby in 2012. At Aintree, he captured the Crabbie's Grand National with Neptune Collonges in 2012 and sent out Big Buck's for four consecutive victories (2009 to 2012) in the race which is now the Grade One Silver Cross Stayers' Hurdle. He saddled Silviniaco Conti to win the Grade One Betfred Bowl in 2014 and 2015. He has been leading trainer at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival three times - in 2008, 2011 & 2015. **Crabbie's Grand National Record: 1992 Just So (6th); 1996 Vicompt De Valmont (10th), Deep Bramble (PU 29th), Brackenfield (UR 19th); 1997 Straight Talk (FELL 14th); 1998 What A Hand (FELL 1st), Court Melody (FELL 6th), General Crack (PU 11th); 1999 Strong Chairman**

(15th), Double Thriller (FELL 1st); 2000 Earthmover (FELL 4th), Torduff Express (FELL 13th), Flaked Oats (FELL 20th), Escartefigue (UR 30th); 2001 Earthmover (FELL 4th); 2002 Murt's Man (PU 17th), Ad Hoc (BD 27th); 2003 Montifault (5th), Fadalko (UR 6th), Ad Hoc (UR 19th), Shotgun Willy (PU 22nd), Torduff Express (UR 27th); 2004 Exit To Wave (PU 9th); 2005 Royal Auclair (2nd), Heros Collonges (8th), L'Aventure (15th), Ad Hoc (FELL 22nd); 2006 Royal Auclair (FELL 1st), Le Duc (UR 8th), Silver Birch (FELL 15th), Heros Collonges (UR 15th), Le Roi Miguel (PU 19th), Cornish Rebel (PU 19th); 2007 Le Duc (UR 6th), Royal Auclair (FELL 9th), Eurotrek (PU bef 22nd), Thisthatandtother (PU 30th); 2008 Cornish Sett (12th), Turko (FELL 25th), Mr Pointment (PU 30th); 2009 My Will (3rd), Big Fella Thanks (6th), Cornish Sett (17th), Eurotrek (PU 17th); 2010 Big Fella Thanks (4th), Tricky Trickster (9th), My Will (FELL 4th), Nozic (UR 20th); 2011 Niche Market (5th), Ornais (FELL 4th), The Tother One (FELL 6th), What A Friend (PU 27th); 2012 NEPTUNE COLLONGES (WON); 2013 Join Together (12th), What A Friend (PU 19th), Harry The Viking (PU 26th); 2014 Rocky Creek (5th), Hawkes Point (18th), Tidal Bay (UR 8th); 2015 Mon Parrain (11th), Rocky Creek (17th), Rebel Rebellion (PU 26th), Unioniste (FELL 5th)

### **Sam Twiston-Davies**

**Born:** October 15, 1992 **Background:** Sam Twiston-Davies was still studying for AS-level exams at school in Gloucestershire when he had both his first Cheltenham Festival winner and first Grand National ride. The son of trainer Nigel Twiston-Davies and his divorced wife, Cathy, (who both rode as amateurs), Sam was successful in pony racing before starting in point-to-points in the 2008/09 season when becoming eligible at the age of 16. Within a few weeks, on December 28, 2008, he rode his first winner between the flags, taking a race at Cottenham in Cambridgeshire on Grenfell, trained by his mother. At Ludlow on February 18, 2009, he scored his first success under Rules when partnering Baby Run, owned and trained by Nigel, to victory in a hunter chase. A career that was bound to flourish gained added lift through Baby Run, for he and Sam went on to finish third in the following month's Foxhunter Chase at the 2009 Cheltenham Festival and later gained one of the season's biggest prizes in the Champion Hunters' Chase at the Punchestown Festival. Sam and Baby Run capped that in March, 2010, when returning to Cheltenham and running out easy winners of the Foxhunter Chase at The Festival. Sam then went to Aintree and partnered Hello Bud into fifth on his Grand National debut. He turned professional shortly afterwards. Sam partnered Hello Bud to victory in the 2010 Betfred Becher Chase over the Crabbie's Grand National course at Aintree and that same month gave Little Josh a brilliant ride to land the Grade Three Paddy Power Gold Cup at Cheltenham. Twiston-Davies rode his father's The New One to win the Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle at The Cheltenham Festival in 2013 and partnered Big Buck's to finish fifth in the legendary staying hurdler's final start in the Ryanair World Hurdle the same year. In the summer of 2014, he was appointed stable jockey to Paul Nicholls and enjoyed a fine first season in the job. He partnered his best total of 145 winners in 2014/15, which included a double at the Cheltenham Festival with Aux Ptits Soins (Coral Cup) and Dodging Bullets (Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase and two successes at the Crabbie's Grand National Festival – All Yours in the Grade One Anniversary 4YO Juvenile Hurdle and Saphir Du Rheu in the Grade One Betfred Mildmay Novices' Chase. This season has not been quite so productive winner-wise but he enjoyed three Cheltenham Festival victories, bringing his total there to seven.

**Crabbie's Grand National Record: 2010 Hello Bud (5th); 2011 Hello Bud (PU 29th); 2012 Hello Bud (7th); 2013 Imperial Commander (PU 22nd); 2014 Tidal Bay (UR 8th); 2015 Rock Creek (17th)**