

CHRISTINE DUNNETT 05/04/06

After possibly the worst week of my racing career to date, a week ago, what a wonderful pick-me-up I had at the first Yarmouth meeting last Wednesday-gaining a winner and a decent second from the bus load I managed to get to the course. Although the sea-side based track has come in for significant criticism from within the racing industry because of the grass cover, I feel I can't get involved in the debate, in that I train within striking distance of the course and have experienced the same lack of growth on my grass at the yard.

To say I was hopeful of some success, wouldn't be far from the truth, but what transpired on the day was something I couldn't have ever expected. I know us trainers are always full of hope, but sometimes, the expectancy is vindicated, as was the case last Wednesday.

Originally I intended having just one runner, GONE 'N' DUNNETT, in the feature sprint race, the Peggy Farley Memorial Handicap-but Evening News racing correspondent John Farley wanted to have a runner in the race and asked if he could lease one of mine, so I thought, the more I enter, the more chance I have of having at least two runners. As it transpired, John ran his own horse Yorkshire Lad, but the race cut up and all four of my entries got in. I have to say I was reasonably confident about GONE 'N' DUNNETT'S chance, but if you saw the race, you will see he was almost put out of the race by Eddie Ahearn's mount Canadian Danehill. The jockey got a 21 day ban for poor riding-his actions caused the fancied runners to be wrong footed when needed and allowed my horse SILVER DANE to come through and win comfortably, in the hands of John Egan, who I rate as a superb jockey-highly under rated.

The irony of the event is that John Farley was to have leased SILVER DANE, which would have allowed him to win his own race.

I couldn't believe the applause I received when I got into the unsaddling enclosure, it was quite something-needless to say, one of the first to congratulate me was John, saying, 'I am so pleased you have won with your horse, my mother would have been delighted-she was a great supporter of yours and followed your career with interest.' The presentation was made by John's daughter Lauren, which I thought was a nice touch. After the race, we all had a few glasses of bubbly to celebrate another long priced, 33-1, Christine Dunnett winner at Great Yarmouth.

Earlier in the afternoon, I had further success when SHE'S DUNNETT came second at 100-1 for my ladies partnership. For me and I think them, it was like winning the Derby they were thrilled to bits, and it showed.

It was another memorable day and I was delighted so many of my racing club members made it to the track to join in the celebrations.

The club goes from strength to strength, we now have almost 100 members and I think everybody is enjoying the experience.

Briefly on the home front, because everyone keeps asking me, no we haven't had anymore foals; one is now more than five weeks late. I think the constant change in temperature is seriously affecting things-I can understand why they don't want to foal, one second its bright sunshine, then we are having cold snaps with hail stones. I think we are more likely to have had a few more by the next time I write.

I have to say, I am pleased overall with the way things are working out, we have already got three winners and there is nine months of the year still to go.

Today I run BELROSE at Kempton with top jockey Jamie Spencer in the plate-on the face of it I am expecting a good show, given we are dropping two grades. Interestingly Norfolk's other locally based trainer George Prodromou saddles what should be the favourite PHARAOH PRINCE.

Later in the week, I hope to run QUEEN TARA and SOUTHBOROUGH LAD at Leicester and if we get in on Saturday I hope to run GOODBYE GIRL at Lingfield.

Other than these we are a little thin on the ground with runners, the racing calendar isn't being kind to us at the moment, so I am hopeful things will improve after the Craven meeting at Newmarket and we can start planning, particularly with the sprinters.