

In the Klarion Spotlight



from the hustle and bustle. It's my favourite place to eat and I am never disappointed.

What would you choose as your last meal? A Greek meze, especially the hummus and halloumi.

What is your favourite drink? A Berocca boost in fizzy water. It's a life saver in the season.

Who has had the biggest influence on your life? My Mam and Dad, for so many reasons. Their unlimited support and guidance has helped me so much in my life so far!

What was the best advice you were ever given? Never be afraid to aim for the top. And 'If you can keep your head when all about you' – Rudyard Kipling's famous line from 'If'.

Tell us something about yourself that we probably don't know. I spent an afternoon drinking Bollinger with Lord and Lady Lloyd Webber at their stately home once!

Do you have any regrets or things you would like to have done differently? I wish I'd got back in the saddle.

Do you have a racing hero, human or equine? My 29-year-old ex-racehorse Summer. She has taught me so much and been a great friend for as long as I can remember.



Emma with Cherry Tree Drive at Watership Down Stud

THIS MONTH: MJR Racing Secretary Emma Thompson

THE Klarion Spotlight this month falls upon another highly valued member of our administration team at Kingsley Park, Racing Secretary Emma Thompson. Emma hails from the North East and joined the yard after a spell working in sales preparation at the prestigious Watership Down Stud. She has fitted in well to the team, and everyone in the office has been on a high recently following Senior Racing Secretary Nicky McGrath's recognition in the Godolphin Staff and Stable

Awards. Visitors to the MJR offices at Park Farm cannot fail to be impressed by the hive of activity they will find there. Managing sizeable teams of staff and horses, especially in these days of year-round activity in a Flat stable, thanks to all-weather racing and racing abroad, is a huge task and Mark is all too aware of the importance of having a highly-trained and efficient admin team on top of the job. Emma plays her part to the full and still finds time to socialise and look after her terrier, Paddy,

over there as much as I can.

Favourite Racecourse? Why? Has to be Cheltenham; the downhill section and the uphill finish, along with the great atmosphere and quality of the horses at a big meeting, just make it unique. That said, I have a soft spot for Hexham and would love to experience Glorious Goodwood some day.

Least favourite? Why? Wolverhampton. It doesn't have much character or atmosphere, and it's not for me at all!

What is the last film you saw and film you would most recommend? Last film I watched was "Edge of Tomorrow" with Tom Cruise and Emily Blunt, which was good but definitely not great. The film I always like to recommend to people is "The Last of the Mohicans", featuring great acting (Daniel Day-Lewis), great scenery, great music and above all a great story. It grips you from start to finish and, in my view, it's one of the greatest movies ever made.

Last book you read and book you would most recommend? I don't read too much but what I have read is mostly related to bloodstock.

Favourite TV programme? The Walking Dead and anything apocalyptic!

What schools did you attend? Mortimer Primary School, Harton Technology College, Bishop Burton College/Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of Milan.

What were your best, and worst, subjects at school? I'd say I enjoyed most, but loved all science subjects. I hated music and physical education; you would often find me and some friends at the bottom of the school field skiving these periods!

Are you superstitious? Not particularly but I believe in fate and instinct.

Lucky number? 7.

Two people you would most like to be seated next to at a dinner party? Ricky Gervais and Karl Pilkington.

Do you have any pet hates? When I need to get in touch with Weatherbys but they don't open until 8.30am!!

Favourite actress? Blake Lively.

Favourite actor? Robert De Niro.

Favourite author? Federico Tesio.

Favourite singer/band? Ellie Goulding.

What pets do you have? A little terrier called Paddy.

What kind of car do you drive? I drive a BMW 3 series, but when I get the chance I try and steal my Dad's Porsche 911, which he isn't keen on letting me have any more after I cracked the sump on a speed bump last year! Whoops!

What cd/s do you currently have in your car? Ed Sheeran.

What station is your radio tuned to? I usually listen to CDs or my iPod in the car, because I can't stand adverts!

What would be your 6 desert island discs and one possession you would like to have on your island? Ed Sheeran – Thinking Out Loud; Paolo Nutini – Pencil Full of Lead; Radiohead – Fake Plastic Trees; U2 – Beautiful Day; Ellie Goulding – How Long Will I Love You; Oasis – Wonderwall. I'd definitely take a bottle of Amaro Montenegro with me!

A restaurant that you would recommend. I usually have a week with my family in the Lake District every year and we always try to get to the Kirkstile Inn near Loweswater at least once during the stay. The food is outstanding in a great atmosphere with a raging fire overlooking the nearby fells, well away

Date and place of birth: I was born at South Shields Hospital on December 7, 1991.

Partner: Becky Smith, Head girl and amateur jockey at Micky Hammond Racing.

How, and when, were you introduced to horseracing? Going racing with my Dad and visits every year to the Middleham Open Day form my earliest memories of horseracing.

And to MJR? After completing my degree in equine science, I had an internship in the equine hospital at the University of Milan, quickly followed by a contract doing sales preparation at Watership Down Stud. Obviously I was well aware of MJR at the time and couldn't believe it when finding a position was available as racing secretary almost immediately after my time at Watership Down. Being offered the position here was a great day in my career.

If you could choose any other career, what would it be? I have always been interested in thoroughbred breeding so I suppose something along the lines of being a bloodstock agent.

Where do you live and what took you to that area? I have always loved Middleham and racing, so the position I have with MJR gave me the opportunity



Emma as a child

to live there.

What was your most exciting racing moment? Andre Fabre's De Treville losing narrowly in last year's Prix Des Chenes (Group 3) at Longchamp. He was my favourite colt at Watership Down Stud.

What is the best horse you have been associated with? Without doubt, Imperial Commander. The father of my best friend from university founded the "Our Friends in the North" racing syndicate who have the horse and I have had several invites to serious race days which have been very exciting, especially for a circuit of the 2013 Grand National when he was travelling so well before unfortunately he bled.

And the best MJR horse, if different

from above? Since I have been at MJR, my favourite has been Muteela. What a tough little filly she is!

Choose one race to have replayed on TV. My Dad and I had talked for months before the 2011 Grand National about how Ballabriggs had a great chance to win that year. The horse looked a million dollars on the day of the race and it was one of those rare times in racing in that the race panned out exactly how we imagined.

The race you would most like to win. There's just something about the Grand National, so breeding my own National winner would be nice!

What is your favourite holiday destination? Italy. I love the culture, love the food, and love the wine.

Place/s you most want to visit? Always wanted to go to Machu Picchu in Peru and do the approach on horseback. I'd also love a big day's racing at Chantilly racecourse in France and I'd also try to build up the courage for a day's cage diving in South Africa, to get up close and personal with a Great White shark!

What is your favourite sport outside racing? Anyone got a motocross bike?

Other recreations? I love the Lake District and its great walks; I try to get

