

That Goodwood bond

By JOHN SCANLON

HORSE RACING has been part of the fabric of the magnificent Goodwood estate since the 3rd

Duke of Richmond introduced public race meetings in 1802. Since then, the picturesque course has become famed as perhaps the most beautiful racecourse in the world.

Despite its distance from Johnston Racing's base in Middleham, some 315 miles from stable door to stable door, Goodwood has always proved a happy hunting ground for horses trained by Mark Johnston.

And three winners in two days at the track at the end of May suggest that the yard's super Goodwood record is in safe hands now that Charlie Johnston is the sole holder of the training licence.

The premier event at the West Sussex venue is of course Glorious Goodwood, the midsummer high spot now titled as the Qatar Goodwood Festival. Mark trained 89 festival winners, and in partnership with Charlie claimed another two last year. But there have been scores more non-festival winners, and Charlie's treble in May bodes well for the future.

The standout winner of those three was

Barnwell Boy, who made a huge impression on his debut when landing a six-furlong novice event in great style on May 26, a victory which had the Thoroughbred Daily News awarding him 'Rising Star' status.



Barnwell Boy impresses under Oisin Murphy

Photograph: Malcolm Wells

The race has been won in the recent past by the subsequent Derby winner, Masar, and this year's 2,000 Guineas third, Royal Scotsman.

Mrs Jane Newett's home-bred colt by Starspangledbanner faced 10 rivals and

was ridden by Oisin Murphy.

Barnwell Boy set off to make all the running, pursued initially by Trevor and Bated Breeze, while the favourite, Packard, drawn nearest the stand rail, ducked left at the start and raced alone before rejoining the main group after a furlong or so.

Travelling strongly at the head of affairs, Barnwell Boy led effortlessly and eventually stretched clear of his rivals, flying home in an impressive time, four and a half lengths clear of Packard. The time was 0.01 seconds inside the standard.

Mark Johnston, on saddling duties at Goodwood, was very impressed.

'He's not very big, but he's pretty sharp and was ready to go,' he said.

'We didn't know what to expect first time out as we didn't know what we were up against. Oisin came in and said he's very fast and that he was quite impressed. I suppose, on pedigree, he's not one we'd have thought of as an out-and-out five-furlong

horse. Maybe we'll be thinking about the Listed Windsor Castle Stakes at Royal Ascot now.'

Barnwell Boy is the first of two foals out of Jane Newett's unraced Frankel mare, Frilly, who was out of the Monsieur Bond

mare, Ladies Are Forever, a full sister to top sprinter, Hoof It. Ladies Are Forever won three renewals of the Group 3 Summer Stakes at York and eight races in all.

Johnston Racing won this event in 2016 with Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed's Yalta, an Exceed and Excel colt. Yalta returned to Goodwood two months later to land the Group 3 Molecomb Stakes, followed home in second by John Brown and Megan Dennis's subsequent Group 1 winner, The Last Lion.

THE seven-furlong handicap on Goodwood's May 27 card contested by **Urban Sprawl** has been won by the stable in recent years through Sutter County and Enlace. Both raced in the colours of Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed, and both were drawn in stall 3. So the portents were surely good when Urban Sprawl, an Iffraaj colt again also owned by Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed, was also drawn 3.

Urban Sprawl, a winner three times last year as a juvenile, made a decent start to this season, finishing second at Musselburgh on his debut and then third in a handicap at Chester's May Festival.

He had the benefit of Joe Fanning aboard, who rode a magnificent race. Quickly away from the stalls, Joe secured a position on the rails from which he dominated the pace. Urban Sprawl led into the straight, pursued by Dark Thirty and Dionysian.

Just as the field appeared to be closing in on the leader at the two-furlong pole, Joe asked the colt for his effort and Urban Sprawl responded immediately, not only to hold off his challengers but to win going away. As they passed the post, Urban Sprawl had won by a length and a half from Yacowlef, with the favourite, Tafreej, a neck away in third.

The horse finished so strongly that Joe had difficulty in pulling him up, using the full extent of the pulling-up area available



Urban Sprawl and Joe Fanning at Goodwood

Photograph: Malcolm Wells

to bring the colt to a standstill!

This was a fourth career success for Urban Sprawl, all achieved over seven furlongs. He is out of the Grand Reward mare, City Glam, a Group 1 winner over five furlongs in her native Argentina.

The Saturday double was completed when **Good Morals** completed her hat-trick in grand style, again under a super Joe Fanning ride.

Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed's Farhh filly won a Wolverhampton novice event in April, before scoring in a Doncaster fillies' handicap on May 20. The hat-trick attempt came in a similar race at Goodwood, over a mile and a half, for which nine fillies went to post.

Joe asked Good Morals to make the running, with Wyoming racing in a clear second. Approaching the two-furlong marker, the fillies spread out across the track ready to make their challenges. By a

furlong and a half out, Good Morals had settled matters. As the ITV Racing commentator put it: 'Good Morals stacked them up, then blew them away!'

Sunset Point finished well to take second, three and a half lengths behind Good Morals, with Haseefah three-quarters of a length back in third.

Good Morals, out of a half-sister to the Criterium de Saint-Cloud winner, Goldamix, may well be targeted at Royal Ascot, though connections will no doubt consider all options for her as she seems ready to move into Pattern company.

• **Mark won the award for Leading Trainer at the Qatar Goodwood Festival on no fewer than 13 occasions, achieving that accolade for the first time in 1998 and most recently in 2019. Charlie will have to go some to match his father's record!**



Good Morals wins under Joe Fanning

Photograph: Malcolm Wells