



1994 - 2022

Record-breaking 29 consecutive  
centuries of domestic winners

Our Winners Tell the Tale

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# Unlucky 13? Not for Johnston Racing

**I**N MY dictionary, the word 'triskaidekaphobia' is defined as extreme superstition regarding the number '13', writes *JOHN SCANLON*.

There are many theories as to the origin of this superstition, many of them surrounding the story of The Last Supper in the Bible, but whatever its original source, there is no doubt that this phobia is widespread wherever you look in society.

You need only consider the numbering of houses in streets, or of floors in high-rise blocks to see the effect it has on the psyche of otherwise rational human beings.

So when on June 13, Johnston Racing contested seven races at five different racecourses the length and breadth of Britain -- at Ayr, Wetherby, Southwell, Salisbury and Brighton -- there will have been many followers for whom expectations of success on the day would have been low.

Yet when the dust settled after a long day's racing, the yard had recorded five individual winners, ridden by five individual jockeys, constituting our most productive day of the year so far. What follows is the story of a remarkable day.

At Southwell, Jaber Abdullah's **Swift Lioness**, a Roaring Lion filly, was looking to put a disappointing display on her seasonal reappearance at Windsor behind her in a mile handicap for three-year-olds. Ten went to post for the race, with Oli Stammers taking the ride. No doubt as a result of that Windsor win, **Swift Lioness** was 20/1.

Acotango, part-owned by the long-time Johnston Racing owner Paul Dean was sent into the lead while Oli was happy to settle **Swift Lioness** in rear. Turning for home she had only one horse behind her but she made good headway and entering the final furlong it was clear she was the only remaining threat to

the leader. She got up in the shadow of the post to win by a head, with **Acotango** finishing five lengths clear of **Come Together**.

This was a third career win for **Swift Lioness**, who was purchased by Johnston Racing for just €30,000 at Goffs Orby Yearling Sale in 2021.

**Mickey Mongoose**, Paul Dean's three-year-old Lope De Vega gelding, was the yard's only runner on the Brighton card. He was partnered in the mile and a quarter handicap by Franny Norton.

Still looking for his first win, **Mickey Mongoose** made the running, and when the field began to close on him in the closing stages of the race he picked up to score by three lengths from **Twilight Guest**, with **Gilded Moon** finishing three-quarters of a length back in third.

Out of the Dark Angel mare, **Midnight Crossing**, who won the Robert J Frankel Stakes (Grade 3) at Santa Anita as a four-year-old, **Mickey Mongoose** was an expensive yearling. Hopefully this first success, achieved in some style, will see him follow an upward curve.

**A**T Ayr, Hussain Lootah's **Dark Points** (pictured above), a Blue Point colt, was having his third start in the six-furlong maiden, with Andrew Mullen riding.

Settled in second behind the early leader, **Si Si Senor**, **Dark Points** was pushed along with a quarter of a mile to race. Taking the lead a furlong out he kept on well and ran out the 16/1 winner by a length and a quarter from **Indivar**, with **Si Si Senor** a length and a quarter back in third.

**Dark Points** is out of his owner's Dark Angel mare, **Dark Rose Angel**, who finished a head behind **Laurens** in the 2017 renewal of **Doncaster's May Hill Stakes** (Group 2).

Later on the Ayr card, Markus Graff's **Alpina Express**, a three-year-old Sea The Moon filly, was making her handicap debut in a handicap over a mile and a quarter. Joe Fanning took the ride, and the filly was opposed by eight other runners.

Sent into the lead after a couple of furlongs, the filly travelled strongly at the head of affairs and eased to a comfortable win, seeing off **Whatacracker** by two and three-quarter lengths with **Breguet Boy** a further length away in third.

This was another homebred winner for Markus Graff out of his **Barathea** mare, **Adalawa**. She has now produced six individual winners on the Flat, five of them trained at Kingsley Park, including **Addicted To You** (Medicean) and **Lord Of the Alps** (Lord Of England).

With four winners in the bag, the spotlight turned to Wetherby where **Flight Of Angels** was representing her owners, 3 Batterhams and a Reay, in the fillies' handicap over a mile and a quarter.

The daughter of **Golden Horn** was seeking her first win at the fifth time of asking and was ridden by Jason Hart. He sent her straight to the front and set out to make all the running, but it looked a tough ask when all five fillies were in line with a couple of furlongs to race.

But she found more, keeping on strongly to score by half a length and a length and a quarter from **Ragosina** and **Angels Landing**.

This filly was purchased by Johnston Racing for 60,000gns at Tattersalls Guineas' Sale in late April last year.

What a day! Anyone lucky enough to have backed all five winners in an accumulator would have received £33,914 in return for his or her £1 stake. Above all, the five-timer underlined the exceptional start made by Charlie to this year's June campaign. ■