

KLARION SHORTS

UNSUNG HEROES

WE'VE become accustomed to bringing you news in the February issue of the Klarion of the latest members of our staff team to be included within the finalists at the Godolphin Stud and Stable Staff Awards. The stable has a proud record of success at the annual celebration of the skills, commitment and contribution of racing's 6,000 stable and stud staff, now in its 14th year.

Sadly, and perhaps surprisingly, none of the Kingsley Park nominees have this year made it to the finals of the various categories, and the awards ceremony on February 19 at London's Jumeirah Carlton Towers Hotel will proceed without Kingsley Park involvement.

At the Klarion, we thought it was only right to acknowledge the efforts and achievements of our nominees this year. There were 10 team members nominated in all. They were: **Mark Billingham** – Dedication To Racing Award; **Ruth Burne** – David Nicholson Newcomer Award; **Cesar Dayaca** – Dedication To Racing Award; **Darren Forster** – Dedication To Racing Award; **Barry Lusted** – Rider/Groom Award; **Savroop Singh** – Rider/Groom Award; **Aiden Smithies** – David Nicholson Newcomers Award; **Lauren Tindle** – Rider/Groom Award; **Patrick Trainor** – Rider/Groom Award; **Rebecca Wright** – Rider/Groom Award

"Our nominees this year have all made a fantastic contribution to the staff team," Mark told the Klarion after the shortlists had been announced for the Godolphin awards.

"At Kingsley Park, we strongly believe in staff development and invest hugely in the training of our staff members.

"As a result of that belief, our dedicated, committed and well-trained staff have played a huge part in our success story over the years. This year's nominees are a credit to themselves and to Kingsley Park, and, frankly, each is worthy of an award."

To be honest, the Klarion was also surprised that none of the Kingsley Park nominees made it on to the shortlists. For example, in Paddy Trainor's case, 2017 was a year when, after being nominated by his peers, Paddy was asked to become an ambassador for racing grooms in an NTF initiative, Racing Grooms.com, a resource which will seek to promote the job of racing groom to young people.

This was included in his nomination form, as was his remarkable achievement in single-handedly organising a period of two minutes' silence at Kingsley Park on Armistice Day in November 2017, which attracted 3,400 viewings in 48 hours on Facebook.

Those standing quietly to attention included a number of unbroken yearlings, who were being educated in long reins at the time!

In face of nominations such as this, we can only imagine the credentials of the individuals who did make the shortlists must be sky high – something that can only be good for the industry as a whole.

In passing, it's worth acknowledging once more the significance of Sheikh Mohammed and Godolphin's support for these awards.

This year's awards carry more than £120,000 in prize-money, and with each year that passes, the prestige associated with the awards continues to grow. Once again, British racing is indebted to Sheikh Mohammed for his innovation and support.

IT'S A GIRL!

A FIRST foal by the former Kingsley Park star, Buratino, was delivered at an Irish stud last month.

Buratino, a son of Exceed and Excel who was so impressive when winning the Group 2 Coventry Stakes in 2015 for Godolphin and William Buick, is

now standing for a second season at Darley's Kildangan Stud in County Kildare, Ireland. He also finished third in the Group 1 Phoenix Stakes and second in the Group 1 Middle Park as a juvenile.

He covered a book of 121 mares during his first season at stud, one of which was the Tobougg mare, Nonna Iole, and on January 7, at Ballinasla Stud in Bonmahon, County Waterford, she produced a filly foal.

The foal was bred by the Parri family's Allevamento Le. Gi., for whom Giovanni Parri commented: "She's a very nice and correct bay filly with a beautiful star in front!"

The dam, Nonna Iole, was Listed-placed. She is the dam of Yoshida, her only runner to date and a three-time winner by Zebedee.

The current manager of the stud, Richard Fitzgerald, told the Klarion that the new arrival is 'very correct, healthy and has great power about her'. He said that the relatively new stud offered boarding options for breeders long and short-term, with some availability for 2018.

Meantime, breeders may wish to note that Buratino's fee for this season is €5,000.

FRIDAY'S GOOD FOR OPEN DAY

IT HAS been announced that this year's Middleham Open Day will revert to its traditional Good Friday slot, on March 30. Once again, the event will be sponsored by ARC and organised by Racing Welfare.

Yards in the town will be open during the morning, and after last year's successful experiment, the equine spa at Kingsley Park Farm will once again be open to visitors.

A full programme of events is

planned for the afternoon on the Low Moor. The Retraining of Racehorses Musical Ride will perform again, and there will be a schooling display of National Hunt horses.

Kingsley Park will then attempt to retain their title in an inter-yard team competition, which is scheduled to include a donkey derby sponsored by Beverley Racecourse.

A showjumping relay, in conjunction with local pony club members, will also be a highlight.

As ever, the town will be busy with market stalls and trade stands, and it will be interesting to see how the event fares as in addition to the All Weather Championships Finals day at Lingfield, there is racing at Newcastle and Bath on that afternoon.

The event provides a unique opportunity for the general public to have a glimpse behind the scenes in racing yards, and is invaluable to local charities. Last year's Open Day, which took place on Easter Monday, assisted the Yorkshire Air Ambulance, Richmond, Catterick and Bedale Riding for the Disabled, Richmond Citizens' Advice Bureau and the Middleham Sports and Wellbeing Association, with whom Racing Welfare had been working towards greater use of Middleham Playing Fields, especially by stable staff.

ROYAL ASCOT PROGRAMME TWEAKED

IN ADDITION to boasting record prize-money for the meeting, £7,305,000 as opposed to last year's £6,665,000, this summer's Royal Ascot meeting will see some changes made to the usual running order, largely as a result of the deliberations of the European Pattern Committee and the

decisions made regarding Listed handicaps.

The royal meeting has featured two Listed handicaps in recent years – the Wolferton Handicap Stakes, run over 10 furlongs on the fifth day of the meeting, and the Sandringham Stakes, a mile event for fillies, run on the second day.

It has been decided that the Wolferton, won for Kingsley Park by Roger Brookhouse's I'm So Lucky in 2006, will now be run as a straight Listed race and moved to the first day of the meeting, Tuesday June 19.

This is to allow the maximum time between this race and Sandown's Listed Gala Stakes, run last year on July 7.

To compensate for this change, the Windsor Castle Stakes switches to the Saturday card.

The Sandringham Stakes, on the other hand, a race won in the past for the stable by the Duke of Roxburghe's Fizzed (1998) and Hamdan al Maktoum's Muteela (2014), now becomes a regular handicap, and switches from Wednesday to Friday.

Although stripped of its Listed status, the prize fund for the race rises by £10,000 to £90,000.

The racecourse is keen to sell the race as the fillies' equivalent of the Britannia, albeit the Britannia boasts a bigger prize pot. Interestingly, to compensate for this change, the Queen's Vase moves from Friday to Wednesday.

One benefit of the change for the Queen's Vase runners is that there is no infield enclosure planned for the Wednesday card, meaning that there will be no crowd where the starting stalls are positioned for the Group 2 event.

Royal Ascot represents the best of British racing and it will be interesting to see how the changes work out in practice.

As ever, for Mark Johnston the meeting will be the focus of intensive planning as the year progresses, and he will be keen to improve on his already impressive Ascot record!

Obituaries

All at Kingsley Park were saddened to hear of the recent deaths of Peter Wilkerson and Mary Hambro.

Peter had a long association with the stable as an owner, and also owned Hertford Offset Limited in Stevenage, which, for many years, printed the Klarion. Among the horses Peter and his wife Rosie had in training at Kingsley House were the multiple winners Miss Offset and Pantone. Peter bred the remarkable Copperwood, a horse he later gave to the Always Trying Partnerships. Copperwood went on to win nine races for Mark, and 15 in all.

Peter and Rosie were great supporters of the yard and tremendous company too. They were frequent visitors to Middleham and always made the effort to attend parties and other social events involving the stable.

Always possessed of a keen interest in racing history, Peter wrote and published a number of small booklets on racing history – notably on the History of Racing in Hertfordshire and on the Great Match – The Flying Dutchman against Voltigeur at York in 1851.

Peter passed away on January 2, at the age of 89. His funeral will take place at St Mary's Church in Welwyn on February 8.

Mary Hambro, a pioneer in the world of bloodstock consignment and a successful owner, breeder and trainer in her own right, died on January 3 after a long battle with cancer at the age of 67. She made her name in being perhaps the first person in Britain to prepare professionally the showing of horses at the sales for major owner/breeders, her practices later becoming the template for modern consignors.

Mary was also heavily involved in British Eventing. She was a vital part of the BE Stewarding team from the Nineties and also acted as an FEI steward at numerous international events.

Born Mary Briggs, Mary was at one time a secretary to both Ian Balding and Ken Oliver. She was married to investment banker Richard Hambro, who died in 2009.

A successful breeder, Mary was the co-breeder of the 1989 Ebor Stakes winner Sapience, who went on to land the Princess of Wales's Stakes and the Jockey Club Stakes, both at Newmarket.