

RACING POST

Friday, August 14, 2020
Issue No. 11,634

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When Frankel and Tom were meant to turn the screw to gallop away into the distance, it simply didn't happen

The dramatic day the wonder horse came closest to defeat, pages 6-7



PAUL KEALY'S BEST BETS

Top tips for a bumper day of racing, page 11



Trainers hail Jockey Club prize boost amid Covid 'catastrophe'

By Bill Barber

TRAINERS including John Gosden and William Haggas have praised the Jockey Club for contributing £3.7 million into prize-money from its own coffers for the last four months of 2020 despite expected losses of £75m in revenue this year due to the impact of Covid-19.

Nevertheless, £13.5m of prize-money will be available to runners at Jockey Club Races (JCR) fixtures between September 1 and December 31 compared to the £16.38m originally budgeted for the period.

Racecourse executive contributions to prize-money have been an increasing source of friction between Britain's tracks and the sport's participants.

Courses have been under no obligation to boost

prize-money from their own funds between the resumption of racing on June 1 and the end of this month - although JCR has done so - due to the financial blow of having no racegoers or hospitality at their fixtures. That led to an outcry over low prize-money levels and the Horsemen's Group levelling accusations of anti-competitive behaviour against the Racecourse Association.

Executive contributions are set to resume to some extent across the board from September onwards and, with a 50 per cent boost in funding from the Levy Board, minimum values will return to pre-pandemic levels for middle to grassroots levels, while the appearance money scheme will restart.

JCR said it would increase its

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300-1

He Knows No Fear (nearest) storms into the record books at Leopardstown. See page 12

PATRICK McCANN (RACINGPOST.COM/PHOTOS)

Flat title 'a one-horse race' says Fallon

By James Burn

THE recent ripple of excitement at a possible five-way tussle in the British Flat jockeys' title race could prove a false dawn according to legendary champion Kieren Fallon, who believes last year's winner Oisin Murphy is out on his own in a "one-horse race".

Fallon's place in racing folklore is set in stone following a sublime career during which he won the Derby three times

and was British champion jockey on six occasions.

He is better placed than most to talk about the trials and tribulations of a championship and is firmly of the opinion Murphy will secure back-to-back crowns.

A treble at Salisbury yesterday took Murphy 18 winners clear of Tom Marquand (76-58), with William Buick on 57 and the Northern-based Ben Curtis on 56. The defending champion is

1-4 with Betfair, who make Buick the 9-2 second favourite and go 7-1 about Marquand.

Curtis, as low as 10-1 with bet365, and Hollie Doyle, who is having the season of her life, are other names to have been mentioned. Jim Crowley, the 2016 champion, had a double at Wolverhampton on Wednesday night and another winner at Salisbury yesterday to move one ahead of Doyle on 48, and the tight-knit nature of the leaderboard has led some

to believe a thrilling climax to the season is in store - a rarity in recent times.

Fallon, however, does not envisage that happening, and sees echoes of the past in how 24-year-old Murphy goes about his business.

Fallon said: "It's probably unfair for me to think for someone else, but when you haven't got a chance of winning it, it's 'Oh, I wasn't going for it anyway'. But there

Continues page 3

Today's cards (F) Pontefract 12.15 54 (F) Chester 1.40 22 (AE) Lingfield 4.25 42 (F) Chepstow 4.35 62 (F) Curragh 1.00 32 (J) Tramore 4.45 70

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FRANKEL'S DEBUT TEN YEARS ON

Over-prepared and unwell: the perfect storm behind Frankel's near disaster

FRANKEL'S reaction to winning a Classic was suitably uncomplicated. Back at Warren Place, as Sandy [Gauravarum, below with his pride and joy] led him from the horse lorry to the garage they passed the feed room.

After a day of being calm he was finally excited, dancing and prancing as the smell of oats and molasses drifted his way, prompting an outburst of what Sandy calls 'his shouting', whinnying at the top of his voice until the requisite bucket was delivered to his door.

As he bent down to pretty well inhale his meal, getting that inside him was as much worrying as he was going to do that evening. Henry [Cecil], on the other hand, had a decision to make by the following day, which was not his alone to make. Would Frankel run in the Derby? He was entered. And the race was just 35 days away.

Henry's doubts about Frankel running in the Derby were well documented; he was still immature. It was too much to ask, too soon. "He'd probably win," Henry told Sandy, as they sat together on the grass the Sunday after the Guineas as Frankel had a pick, "but it would be too hard on him."

Jane [Cecil] is convinced that Henry was never, ever going to run Frankel in the Derby, but he had an obligation to consider the option. After all, horses the shadow of Frankel have successfully made the transition from a mile at Newmarket to a mile and a half at Epsom. His father Galileo had won not just the Derby, but the Irish equivalent as well; he had the race distance in his blood. After his Guineas win, Frankel was officially joint-rated the best

horse on the planet, unheard of in one so young. Frankel made his racecourse debut ten years ago yesterday. Today, in an exclusive extract from his new book, author **Simon Cooper** recalls one of the most dramatic races from the glorious career that followed

horse on the planet, unheard of in one so young.

I consider it to Henry's enormous credit that when he put the call in to Prince Khalid [Abdullah] later that Sunday, his advice was no, let's skip the Derby and head for Royal Ascot. After all, he was a very ill man. The chances of having another Derby prospect were at best slim. Why not have one last throw of the dice? But as

Shane [Fetherstonehaugh] said, Frankel meant the world to Henry. Prince Khalid meant the world to Henry. Between them they already had five Derby victories. They had scaled that particular mountain. They didn't need to potentially sacrifice Frankel in an attempt to win a race that neither they nor Frankel needed to win.

Some say this is a mark against Frankel; the failure to contest the Derby. But in the arena of sporting endeavour you have to pick and choose your niche within your chosen

'Mike Marshall, for all the awfulness of the St James's Palace Stakes, considers it to be Frankel's finest race'

sport. We don't diminish the status of Roger Federer, the winner of more tennis Grand Slams than any other man in history, because the wins are all singles and none doubles. Nobody says Usain Bolt needs to win a marathon. Or Cristiano Ronaldo have a stint in goal. The truth is Frankel's destiny lay in races elsewhere.

Royal Ascot. The world's greatest pageant of horseracing. Five days in mid-June when the impeccably dressed and the impeccably bred vie for attention. Most years it is a toss-up as to which of the two will fill the front pages; this year there was no competition. Frankel was the headline act, running once again over a mile in the feature race of the first day, the St James's Palace Stakes.

It looked an ultra-competitive race with six Group 1 winners in the field, but Frankel was expected to dispatch them with disdain, putting on a show for Her Majesty the Queen. The money spoke of just one horse: Frankel was 1-3, the rest were 10-1 or longer. What could possibly go wrong? As it turned out, nearly everything. And the day had started so well.

This was one occasion when Henry passed the winning post ahead of Frankel, riding as he did in a horse-drawn carriage with the Queen and Prince Philip, as is tradition, arriving at the course in the royal

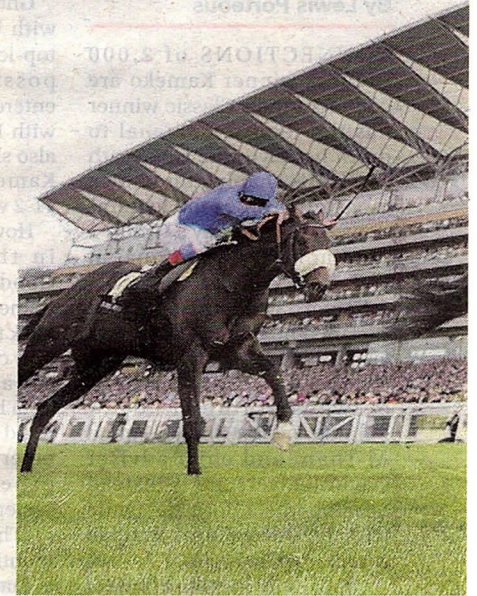
procession just ahead of the first race. Henry was accorded this considerable honour by invitation of the Queen, who had knighted him Sir Henry Cecil in her Birthday Honours List

that had been announced three days earlier, on the second Saturday in June, her official birthday. That same Saturday was also Frankel's second gallop on the Racecourse Side within three days and that was perhaps, just maybe, the harbinger of what was to transpire in the race itself.

You can read a great deal of why and what went wrong in the St James's Palace; there are many opinions. The tactics were wrong. The pacemaker went too fast. The jockey made a bad call. The others were better than they were given credit for. Whatever the reason or reasons, the simple fact is that as the field rounded the home bend and straightened up with three furlongs to go Frankel had once again splayed his field. It was almost time for the applause to begin. But two furlongs and 25 seconds later it looked as if he was going to lose. Sandy, in the stands, could no longer watch. He sat down, put his head in his hands, closed his eyes and wished it all over. But why? What had happened?

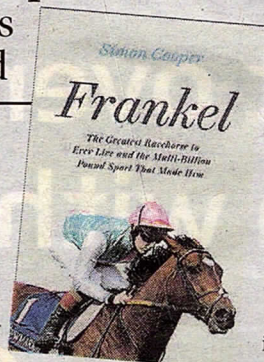
IT WASN'T as if Frankel had misbehaved in the preliminaries, at the start or even in the race itself. He broke just fine from the stalls and Tom [Queally] had him settled at fourth or fifth in the middle of the pack as Rerouted scorched away, doing for once what a pacemaker should do. So for the first third of the race, things unfolded exactly as planned. But then Tom chose to make his move going from fourth to a clear second, before using the bend into

the home straight to wind in Rerouted, easily closing the gap, then passing him with that blistering middle-race pace that was becoming Frankel's trademark. It was as spectacularly dominant a piece of Franklesque as you could ever wish to see. And then it all turned to mush. When Frankel and Tom were meant to turn the screw to gallop away into the distance, it simply didn't happen.



A paddling Frankel and an agitated Henry
Drawing level with the enormous Royal Ascot crowd at the two-furlong pole, Frankel is leading by six lengths as Excelebration, who had run him close in the Greenham Stakes at Newbury to open the season, comes out of the pack. Tom hits Frankel twice as he idles in front, refusing to pick up the pace. But the gap between first and second narrows rather than widens. Nowhere was this written in the script. With a furlong to go the lead is still three lengths but suddenly Frankel is paddling. His legs are moving but the momentum has gone. In the penultimate half-furlong, Zoffany passes Excelebration. He is closing on Frankel with every stride. In the stands Henry is agitated, shuffling along the steps in tandem with his horse, his face a picture of disbelief and concern.

Mike Marshall (right, opposite), for all the awfulness of the St James's Palace Stakes, considers it to be Frankel's finest race, for he simply wasn't right that day. For whatever reason Henry had done something he never did before or since with Frankel in giving him two strong gallops within a week of a race. Maybe he thought it was required, with a gap of six weeks between the Guineas and Royal Ascot? Regardless of the timing it was the nature of the Saturday work on the Racecourse Side watered gallop that Mike recalls; he describes Frankel as "flat" that morning. Shane remembers it as well, both for the proximity of the two gallops and that on the Saturday Frankel sweated up badly.



Pictures: EDWARD WHITAKER (RACINGPOST.COM/PHOTOS) and ALAN CROWHURST (GETTY IMAGES)



Did he have a virus? Was he simply a bit under par? Without the evidence of a definitive blood test, we will never know for sure. The word virus itself is used in as maddeningly a non-specific sense in horses as much as it is used with humans. It can cover everything from a very slight temperature on a single day to a condition that closes down a racing stable for weeks or even months at an end.

By the Tuesday of the race Frankel may well have been, to all intents and purposes, back to his normal self, except when he was asked to dig deep the effects of the previous week lingered, that reservoir of colossal stamina and speed depleted. When Tom reported that he "idled", maybe it was to be the one and only occasion when he was saying, "Guys, I just don't have it in me today."

AS THE winning post comes and goes, Henry exhales and raises his eyes to heaven. Frankel has won. Just. In the final 100 yards, when Zoffany was closing him down, Frankel, never one to let another pass him, found enough to retain a three-quarters-of-a-length lead. It is to the credit of Tom, who took much flak in the aftermath of the race for going after Rerouted when, in the opinion of some, he should have bided his time, that he kept calm in those final two furlongs. While all the other jockeys were furiously at work he didn't go after Frankel, just letting him keep on striding out as if this was just another day at the races.

As a win it might not have been pretty. It surely caused plenty of consternation. In the immediate aftermath some bookmakers priced up Frankel as second favourite for the upcoming Duel on the Downs, preferring his older rival Canford Cliffs. But as Jane said to Henry, observing his face of thunder as they headed for the winner's enclosure, "He did win you know!"

As Frankel took a victory parade in

front of the stands, the crowd were with Jane on that. Everyone from the Royal Box to the farthest stands cheered and clapped. The winner's enclosure was mobbed. Long after the horses had been led away, racegoers remained, debating what they had just seen.

Henry might not have believed much in modern science but racing authorities do. After the glory and adulation of the Royal Ascot crowd, Sandy had to take Frankel directly to the less-than-glamorous dope box, as it is colloquially known, where winners are drug tested by the Jockey Club's Equine Health and Welfare Department by way of a urine test.



Racing Post reader Tony Wells recalls a magical evening at Newmarket when he witnessed the debut of an equine great

IAWOKE the day of Frankel's debut to the sound of rain on the conservatory roof. Oh dear, my wife Sarah had chosen this day for our annual trip to Newmarket. We had been going to one of the Newmarket Nights fixtures each year for several years and this year Sarah had chosen the night that Westlife were playing after racing. We always looked forward to our trip from Epsom to Newmarket. Invariably, the weather was good. We'd stop for lunch at our favourite pub and then head to the racecourse. The drive from Six Mile Bottom to the July course is always a highlight for me. But that day it was raining and

This is not always an instant process, waiting around in a secure stable until your horse is ready to relieve itself, the output captured in a jug fixed to a long broom handle. If the wait becomes

interminable a hair or blood sample is the back-up option. As I say, it is not very glamorous but as a method of deterring wrongdoing it seems to work. In a typical year, of the 90,000 runners on British racecourses around 7,000 will be tested with fewer than 20 coming back positive.

Frankel was a regular visitor; in fact he never missed out and it was very normal, except after the St James's

Palace Stakes when Stephen Kielt was called to the dope box.

HIS first thought was how extremely tired Frankel looked as he went about what he had been called to do - remove one of Frankel's racing plates. There was no lameness, in fact Frankel was never lame in his entire three seasons of racing, which is unusual, but when this particular aluminium plate had become loose nobody knows. It could have been in the race or sometime after.

Even though it hadn't caused lameness it would have been an impediment in itself - think of trying to run with the laces of one shoe undone. One way or another, when you stock up the possibilities

over-preparation, virus, tactics, racing plate - Mike Marshall's assessment of the St James's Palace looks to have more than a grain of truth to it. Teddy Grimthorpe considers it his bravest and gutsiest performance. The more the tale unfolds, the more it seems that way.

Whichever way you cut it, Frankel was now seven for seven, having dispatched every challenger of his generation. But he was only halfway done. He now had older horses to defeat. Those considered by some his betters. As for now, the dope box done with, all Frankel wanted was his garage box, a bucket of feed and a couple of days' rest.

This extract is taken from Frankel: The Greatest Racehorse of All Time and the Sport That Made Him by Simon Cooper, Harper Collins, £20

'He was the people's horse but for a magic moment I had him to myself'

showed no signs of relenting. It was going to be a wet Newmarket Night.

I looked at the card in the Racing Post over lunch. It was typical of a music night, with a Class 3 handicap being the best race on the card, backed up by a few lower-grade handicaps and a couple of maidens for two-year-olds.

I know this, as I've still got the racecard. But what I read in the Racing Post made me forget about the weather. In one of the two-year-old races, the preview said that Henry Cecil had his best two-year-old making his debut. Reports from the gallops were positive and the fact that he had been named Frankel, after the late Bobby Frankel, who had trained for Prince Khalid Abdullah in America, suggested he could be a bit special.

I made up my mind that I was

going to go to the pre-parade ring to try to catch a glimpse of Frankel. It was raining when we arrived at the course and was still pouring down when racing started. Sarah and I had found a dry spot in a bar behind the stands and venturing out to watch the first race was not even contemplated. Despite the incessant rain, I headed towards the pre-parade ring as the second race was in progress.

For those who have been to the July course, you will know what a special place the pre-parade ring is. For those who haven't, put it on your bucket list. It's the only parade ring I know where you stand in the middle, as the horses walk around you. On a hot day the tree-lined paddock is the perfect place to get out of the sun.

But on this wet Friday night I was standing there alone when I first clapped eyes on the horse who

would go on to be the greatest of all time. Even to my untrained eye, he looked impressive. He was bigger and stronger than the other two-year-olds in the field.

I watched the race from the lawn just beyond the winning line and as they came out of the gloom, I remember Derek Thompson calling Frankel home, as he asserted inside the final furlong from Nathaniel. At the time I didn't realise I was watching probably the best maiden race ever.

I was fortunate enough to see Frankel in five more of his races. But by the end he was the people's horse and there was no chance of me having him to myself, as I had that rainy night at Newmarket. Little did I know I was standing in the presence of greatness. Those few minutes will stay with me forever.