

## POINT-TO-POINT PRESS RELEASE

By Will Milburn

Issued on behalf of the Yorkshire Area Point-to-Point Secretaries Association

Please feel free to use all or part of this information to suit your individual requirements

The Middleton held their meeting this weekend at Sheriff Hutton courtesy of land owner and local trainer Mick Easterby, who was also celebrating his birthday. This popular meeting attracted runners from far and wide and is home to Yorkshire's highly prestigious Grimthorpe Gold Cup. Dale Peters has taken a liking for this track over the last couple of seasons and again brought a strong contingent to the meeting.

The feature race on the card was the Grimthorpe Gold Cup and a strong field turned up on the day with top class performers such as Young Hurricane, One Conemara, Foxrock and last years Heart Of All England winner Streets Of Milan, however it would be the Southern raider Ballyrath who would take the honours for rider Huw Edwards and trainer Heidi Brookshaw. Foxrock made a gallant effort under novice rider Alex Duncan and made nearly all the running but found only the winner too good as a good leap at the last allowed Ballyrath to stay on strongly to the line and cause an upset, Foxrock filled second while previous winner of this race One Conemara was in third under John Dawson. It was only Huw Edwards fifth winner in points and the winning son of Fleminsfirth clearly relished the step up in trip.

Will Milburn was again in form this weekend by recording a training and riding double, his first success came in the opening Hunt Members race aboard the 11 year old Six A Side who was recording his 12th career success, the pair were always in touch and travelled strongly two out to lead approaching the last and battled on strongly to hold off the fast finishing favourite Aphaea under Will Easterby, whilst long time leader Wizardora boxed on for third. The winner has an incredibly consistent record been out of the first four now on only three occasions in thirty runs and the application of first time cheekpieces eeked out a touch more from the winner in the closing stages "we felt he idled a bit in the finish last time so we put the cheekpieces on to help him concentrate" commented Will who hopes his winner can continue his good form.

The Open Maiden was divided on the day and would give Will his second winner of the day in division one courtesy of the 5 year old debutante Chanting Hill. Purchased from Doncaster Sales last September this 5 year old daughter of Milan made a good impression on her first start travelling and jumping nicely to lead on the run to three out and staying on strongly to hold off Scarlett Peak near the line under Joe Wright. Purchased for £4,500 Will bought the mare along with his co-worker Marcus Haigh "we wanted something to buy and sell on, she was a big strong chasing type and thought she'd be ideal to go pointing" said Will who admits they had hoped she could make her presence felt on debut "she has always pleased us at home so we were hopeful she'd go well...she'll come on plenty for that!" admitted

Will who only has three horses in his care, Chanting Hill will now head to the sales towards the end of the month "she looked a bit green but we're delighted, she won't run again for us, she'll head to the sales now!" said a delighted co owner Marcus Haigh.

Division two of the Open Maiden went to Dale Peters with his consistent Tom Tom Turnaround, owned by Mr Jon Balding, Dale had a battle on his hands over the final two fences as hot favourite Kimberley boy challenged under Will Easterby along with 4 year old debutante Elusive Package under Ed Glassonbury and no doubt he will be getting off the mark in due course. It was the start of a double for Dale Peters who has made several successful raids on the Yorkshire track. The winner who was recruited from Ireland where he showed plenty of potential made a pleasing return last time after a lengthy break to finish fourth.

Dale's second winner on the card came in the closing 2m 4f Maiden for horses who have never run under rules. Bask In The Glory took a strong hold in the early stages but was never headed and the well fancied Francesca Nimmo raider tried to land a blow in the closing stages but could never reach the leader. Dale will be familiar with the family of the winner as he has done so well with his full brother Benefit Of Luck "he's only 70% fit he's quite a handful at home so I haven't done too much with him" said Dale who will no doubt hope this son of Beneficial can improve further. Back in third was the Roger Marley newcomer Withoutmoreado under Jack Jordan.

One of the most hotly contested races of the day came in the Red Mills Intermediate race and saw numerous top class progressive horses take part including Robthegetaway, Mr Muldoon and Royal Chant. A furious pace was set from the get go from Robthegetaway but it would be the recent Corbridge winner Buck Dancing and Jess Bedi who would storm through to cause an upset and win at odds of 12-1, the progressive Joe O'Shea trained Mr Muldoon came home in second and could now be Cheltenham bound after qualifying for the final, with Royal Chant and John Dawson back in third. Trained and ridden by Jess Bedi who is now clear in the Yorkshire novice championship and looks to have a strong chance in the open division too, formerly campaigned in Ireland where the winner's sole victory came first time out in a maiden point on quick ground, future plans for the winner are unknown but would surely have claims at Cheltenham on fast ground "honestly not sure what next, we had it in mind when entering the race so can't rule it out!" admitted Bedi.

The Restricted race saw an improving 6 year old take is tally to two from four starts as the Nicky Tinkler trained Hafajay ridden by Jack Jordan, the pair were always prominent and look to be getting the better of the favourite Omar Maretti when they were left clear at the last and stayed on well to win cosily from Super Lunar and Will Milburn in second, whilst third went to Monsun Storm and Joe Williamson. The 6 year old son of Haafhd is going from strength to strength at the moment, owned and bred by Beechwood stud owner Steve Knowles he looks like he can continue to take a step forward "he's improving all the time, he jumps and stays well, he's a nice horse for the future" said Jack Jordan who has ridden him on all four of his starts this season.

The Riders Conditions race nearly saw another upset as the odds on favourite Path To Freedom surrendered the lead at the last after a bad blunder but rallied strongly towards the line and win under

John Dawson, whilst Things Change looked to benefit from his last run under Will Easterby and come home in second, third went to the formerly useful Cup Final who was returning from a two year break under Marcus Haigh and can no doubt follow up in a novice riders event next time. Plans for the winner are unclear at the moment but will likely take in another hunter chase.