



Mark Kelly Racing

Welcome to our first newsletter from us all here at Mark Kelly Racing – we're proud to welcome all new syndicate members and hope you all enjoy this fantastic experience.

As expected, Youneverwalkalone is attracting a lot of interest and that's not just down to his iconic name. We're receiving great reports from Ravenswell Farm in terms of his training and look forward to supporting him at the track early next year.

As promised, we'll be producing a monthly newsletter to keep you up to date with all the latest news, views and events down at the yard. We'll also be providing exclusive commentary and up to date developments to keep you firmly in the loop on Youneverwalkalone's progress.

In this first newsletter, we hope to provide some background and key information which we hope you will find useful. Firstly, it is important to explain the ethos behind Mark Kelly Racing. We are a small team but share a true dedication to provide a first-class experience to all our members whilst ensuring horse welfare is firmly at the top of our priority list.

Continue reading to find out how we arrived at the point of launching a syndicate and how we hope to develop our journey into the future, we hope you enjoy the read!

About Mark



After many years of following horse racing, Mark considered the possibility of perhaps owning his own racehorse to finally fulfil a lifelong dream. After considering a variety of different horses, all with varying attributes, Mark purchased his first horse O'Hanrahan Bridge in 2017. This horse was chosen by Mark as he had just won a Point to Point in Ireland and Mark could see great potential in his ability. O'Hanrahan Bridge was originally stabled with Rebecca Curtis in Pembrokeshire before being brought closer to home to be trained by northern powerhouse Donald McCain Jnr.

With the help of Donald McCain Jnr, Mark's second horse Goffsbridge Girl was added in 2018 and in the summer of 2020, Mark launched Mark Kelly Racing and Youlneverwalkalone Racing Syndicate.

Mark was keen to add a further horse to his portfolio and also add an additional training facility to match his plans to incorporate a trainer in the south as well as the north. Having spoken with many top trainers in the south, one trainer stood out to Mark and the team - that trainer was Fergal O'Brien. Fergal's reputation and enthusiasm matched Mark's ambition to give shareholders the best value for money experience whilst keeping horse welfare a key priority – this was the perfect match for Mark Kelly Racing.

In May 2021, Mark visited Goffs Spring Store Sale in Doncaster with Fergal and his partner Sally. After viewing many horses, the team agreed to purchase a beautiful 2018 Gelding by Walk in The Park. This gelding has since been pre-trained by Park Farm Stables and Christy Mews and returned to Fergal's Ravenswell Farm Stables to start his main training. This horse has now been named Youlneverwalkalone.

Mark's future plans are to add more quality horses and offer shareholders the

best possible experience in horse race syndication. "Each shareholder must feel that at any time they can contact myself or any of our team, day or night. We don't want to be faceless. I want the experience to be more personal than other competitor's syndicates".

Horse welfare is also very important to us. Mark comments "My first horse lost 2 years of racing because of a leg injury sustained in training. We waited for him to recover and get back to full health. I'm sure some owners would have given up on him, but not us. O'Hanrahan came back and finished 2nd five consecutive times before winning a 3m Handicap at Carlisle in November 2020 - one of the proudest moments of my life plus very emotional".

"As with a horse's retirement from racing, I don't like to use the word retirement on its own because many racehorses (even though they have finished racing) don't become redundant. We have rehomed one of our horses recently to a private owner whose daughters are mad on horses. It is a priority for all of our horses to be given the best life after racing and continue to receive the best care."

The Journey Begins: Goffs Spring Store Sale 2021





The team had viewed at least 5 other horses leading up to this year Goffs Spring Store Sale but with so many quality entrants, Fergal decided we should attend the auction. It was a first visit to a horse sale for Mark Kelly Racing (MKR) as we had previously instructed agents to purchase horses on our behalf, but Fergal and Sally were adamant that we should have the experience of attending and being part of the decision process. The staff were all incredibly welcoming and very accommodating (especially when we kept getting lost within the vast complex of stables and auction rooms!).

The week was split into a 2-day sale for 3 and 4-year-old Store horses, with Point to Pointers making up the final 3 days. A store horse is normally a 3-year-old which is un-named but has been bred specifically for National Hunt Racing. Flat horses normally get purchased at 2 as their careers start earlier and some run at 2. National Hunt Horses (Jump horses) normally start their careers at 4 or 5 with many now being introduced to Point to Point race meetings mainly in Ireland at age 4 before being sold at Tattersalls or Goffs P2P Auctions several months later.

We have had 2 previous Point to Point winners (one still in training, O'Hanrahan Bridge) but as we had reserved the name Youlneverwalkalone with the BHA, we knew the time was right to purchase an unnamed store horse.

The morning began with all the UK and Ireland top trainers, jockeys, owners and stable staff walking around the vast stable facilities viewing horses of all different sizes, colour and breeding. It seemed every horse we looked at, Paul Nicholls or Nicky Henderson had their eye on too!

Initially we didn't think there would be any point in looking at Youlneverwalkalone as we didn't believe he was within our budget. However, Fergal and his partner Sally who (through their connections) were very impressed with him and encouraged us to take a closer look. We knew he was a great horse the moment we saw him and were delighted to close a deal on the purchase of Youlneverwalkalone at the sale.

Youneverwalkalone had been in early pre training with Park Farm Racing and Christy Mews who have a fantastic reputation for breaking horses in, teaching them to canter and more importantly jump. Christy has been excellent in keeping us up to date with his progress and has sent us some brilliant videos of Youneverwalkalone:

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1429467248566091781>

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1417867046361223170> (4th Horse)

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1417180411734761476>

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1417180411734761476>

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1401512063076290560> (2nd horse)

Meet the Trainer - Fergal O'Brien:

We are delighted to introduce you to our wonderful trainer Fergal O'Brien. Many of you will be familiar with him as a fantastically talented trainer with a keen eye for detail and a candid, straight talking approach.

As a syndicate member, now is your chance to find out more about Fergal and what happens behind the scenes at his Gloucester Training Facility. Take a look at the following links which provide a great introduction to Fergal, his yard and the recent merger with Graham McPherson:

Fergal:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op4A4_IKHRE

A day at Ravenswell

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1437474009445244938>

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1437474009445244938>

Fergal's Merger with Graham McPherson plus a piece on retraining of racehorses.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1rMd04iKDE>

In the news this month:



Fergal O'Brien adds second yard to expand his thriving training operation

"It's important we keep our feet firmly on the ground. What we don't want to do is go boom and bust"

Leading jumps trainer Fergal O'Brien is to join forces with fellow Gloucestershire operator Graeme McPherson from October 1, a move the pair believe can help take them to the big time.

O'Brien, who reached 50 winners for the season at Uttoxeter on Wednesday by beating McPherson's Zulu Dawn with Samba Dancer, leads the trainers' championship and hopes that everything will be finalised in time for the start of the core jumps season in October.

McPherson, whose yard is located 16 miles from O'Brien's base at Ravenswell Farm, explained how the new partnership came about when speaking to the Racing Post on Thursday after a hectic day informing staff and owners on Wednesday.

McPherson said: "It stemmed out of a conversation we had last year and we've been discussing it for a few months this year. Fergal and I, independently, are fiercely ambitious, we both want our yards to succeed and it seemed to us that we could, by going into partnership, take things to the next level and hopefully to the very top level.

"Fergal will have the traditional trainer role and my role will be to run the business efficiently so the owners get the best possible experience of having horses at O'Brien McPherson Racing. I will run the commercial side and let Fergal get on with doing what he does best, which is training horses and training winners."



McPherson revealed the reaction has been overwhelmingly positive from owners and staff alike, adding: "Every owner I phoned yesterday was like, 'God. That's a surprise. I didn't see that coming.' Then we talked it through and it was like, 'What's the downside?' The answer to that is hopefully we don't believe there is a downside."

O'Brien, whose partner Sally Randell plays a key role in his business, was equally excited at the potential of the new alliance and said: "I'm over the moon. I've known Graeme for a long time from when he moved to the Cotswolds and from point-to-points. He's a good guy. Sally and I are very excited to be involved with him."

"We rented a barn off Graeme last October and it's just worked out well for us. Graeme will bring so much more to the party on the business side. It's a fantastic opportunity for us to expand the yard without having to invest in more stables and stuff at Ravenswell."

McPherson, also a lawyer, added: "Obviously there's been training partnerships in the past – father and son or husband and wife, things like that – but I think this is pretty revolutionary within racing to have yards combining to try to absolutely maximise what we're all hoping to achieve."

"October 1 is when we plan to have everything combined by. There are still things to be signed and stuff like that, but we're well on track to kick things off from then."

Our Welcome Pack and Share Certificate



Most members should now have received their MKR welcome packs and share certificates. Please check your spam and junk boxes.

We have received great feedback on our welcome packs and it's great to hear our efforts have been worthwhile.

Many shares have been purchased as gifts for friends or loved ones and it's great to have so many members interacting on our social media platforms.

Stable Visits

We have been in discussions with Fergal's team on the best available dates for our first stable visit. Given the merger of the two stables, we are looking at the end of November which will allow for all the winter horses to have arrived back at Ravenswell from their Summer break and be well into their winter training.

I will be emailing everyone towards the end of the month to register interest in attending. Maximum attendees will be capped at 50 due to parking and it will be 1 allocated visit per share. A ballot will be held to select which members will be successful.

We should be able to have monthly visits in the new year weather permitting. I will update everyone via email, Facebook and twitter.

Don't forget to follow us @ Mark Kelly Racing (Facebook) & @Mark_Racing (Twitter).

Forward Plan 2021 / 2022

As Youlneverwalkalone is due back at Ravenswell stables very soon after his summer break, attention will turn to conditioning him, initially to begin his full jumps training. His size and weight is expected to increase over the coming months as he strengthens up and progressively moves through his training routine. Initial plans with Fergal have been to look at one of the Goffs Spring Store Bumpers at Newbury (Class 2).

Depending on Youlneverwalkalone's progress and growth we could see maybe a couple of bumper entries (flat races over National Hunt Rules with no obstacles to jump) before getting him ready for his novice hurdle career. Depending on ground and race availability this may be May or September 2022.

Fergal has been very impressed with his early speed and jumping quality and we're really looking forward to getting him going.

Fergal's Stable stars of 2021/22 season

Fergal's record is second to none and he passed the 100 winners mark last season even though the season was cut short due to Covid 19. Already this season he and his team have passed 50 winners and he's in for another record-breaking season.

We have listed below a few of his stable stars from the last 12 months who are worth following this Autumn, Winter and Spring.

Hurricane Harvey
Alaphilippe
Courtandbould
Ballyhome
Teqany
Stoners Choice
Temple Park

Paint The Dream
Elham Valley
Ask Dillon
Silver HallMark

Mark Kelly Racing - Horses In Training



O'Hanrahan Bridge (IRE) B.G. BY Gold Well (GB) EX Greenacre Mandalay (IRE) 2012 Bay Gelding

O'Hanrahan Bridge had a very exciting season finishing 2nd on 5 occasions before going on to win a competitive handicap hurdle at Carlisle. After a slight set back through injury, Trainer Donald McCain now believes O'Hanrahan's future lies in chasing and after a well-deserved summer break, The Big O will hopefully enjoy another successful autumn and winter campaign.

We will be offering members the opportunity to also apply for race tickets for O'Hanrahan Bridge this season. O'Hanrahan is due out in the coming weeks and is normally targeted at the northern racetracks. Keep an eye on our social media pages to apply for race day tickets.



O'Hanrahan Bridge at Bangor Racecourse in May 2021.



O'Hanrahan Bridge winning The RacingTV.Com Novice Handicap Hurdle at Carlisle Racecourse (09/11/2020)

We hope you have enjoyed learning a bit more about Mark Kelly Racing and our plan for the syndicate in the coming months. Look out for regular updates on our socials and our next newsletter which will be full to the brim with updates on the long awaited Mark Kelly Racing merchandise, exclusive comments on Horse Racing week, Ravenswell Farm Updates and Performances of the month. There will of course be an update on Youlneverwalkalone, plus all the latest news on the new national hunt season.

Thank you once again for your purchase and welcome to the team!

Mark

Racing Manager
Mark Kelly Racing



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