

Harry Skelton
2020/2021 Jump Jockeys'
Championship Leader



Brian Hughes
2020/2021 Jump Jockeys'
Championship Defending Champion
Northern Jump Jockey Of The Year
2020/2021



Danny McMenamin
Champion Conditional Jockey
2020/2021



JP McManus
Champion Jump Owner 2020/2021



Paul Nicholls
Champion Jump Trainer 2020/2021



JUMP RACING'S CHAMPIONS

2020/2021

2020/21 JUMP JOCKEYS' CHAMPIONSHIP LEADER HARRY SKELTON

STATS



BORN: SEPTEMBER 20, 1989
(AGE 31 YEARS)



LIVES IN: WARWICKSHIRE



**MARRIED TO: FELLOW
JOCKEY BRIDGET ANDREWS**



**FIRST WINNER:
TEMPER LAD, EXETER,
OCT 10, 2007**



**FIRST GRADE 1 WINNER:
ROKSANA, CHELTENHAM,
MAR 12, 2019**



On his rivals:

"Brian is a very competitive person - he is highly driven and a true professional as well. We want the same result and hopefully both of us stay in one piece and we make it to the end.

"It is a challenge, and it is exciting, but this is where I've always wanted to be. I have always wanted to win a title and I'm in a very good position. The horses have been running well all season and that's credit to the team at home.

On this season:

"Dan took a decision over the summer that we wanted to concentrate on quality as we had the young ones coming through and that is what we have done. I've had plenty of Grade 1 winners this season, which has been brilliant, but we never really thought that I would be in contention for the jump jockeys' championship.

"It was coming out of Ascot a few weeks ago when I had a treble - suddenly I was only 12 behind and we got a sniff of winning. That was the turning point as I thought 'Anything can happen here'.

"It's been a great season. The Grade 1 double at Sandown in the Tingle Creek and Henry VIII was very special. At Aintree we had another two Grade 1's, including My Drogo, who is very exciting for the future. I've been lucky to ride some fabulous horses this season and that is down to supportive owners - I have to thank them a lot for what they have done."

On what sharing success with his brother means:

"It's a family operation, I'm there every day and I see it all. I can't thank the staff enough, especially when we had that horrible weather through the winter - it would put anyone off - but no-one grumbled, and they kept working away. If I do win the championship, I can do it for everyone in the yard - that's the way I feel about it. People might say why does he always get so excited, but it does mean a bit more being a family business."

Trainer Dan Skelton on what it would mean to him:

"The dream was always that one day, maybe, I could be champion trainer and Harry could be champion jockey, and if we can achieve 50% of that, I would be absolutely thrilled for him. We agreed to park it for three days over Aintree but now that we are into the final days of the season, I'll be giving him all the support I can."

**FATHER NICK SKELTON
WAS AN INTERNATIONAL
SHOWJUMPER, WHO
WON GOLD MEDALS AT
THE LONDON AND RIO
OLYMPIC GAMES.**

JUMP JOCKEYS' CHAMPIONSHIP 2020/2021 TOP FIVE

| JOCKEY | WINS |
|--------------------|------|
| Harry Skelton | 150 |
| Brian Hughes | 140 |
| Harry Cobden | 123 |
| Nico de Boinville | 83 |
| Sam Twiston-Davies | 82 |

FIVE KEY WINNING RIDES

IN THE 2020/21 JUMPS SEASON

POLITOLOGUE Trainer: Paul Nicholls Owner: John Hales

Grade 1 Belfair Tingle Creek Chase 1m7.5f, Sandown Park: 5th Dec 2020

With Altior a late absentee, the 2020 Champion Chase hero Politologue stepped in for another starring role, capping a fine Saturday for Skelton who had earlier been victorious aboard Allmankind in the Grade 1 Henry VIII Novices' Chase. This was a foot perfect display of jumping from the front. Winging the final fence, the dashing grey powered clear from stablemate Greaneteen up the Sandown hill.

SHAN BLUE Trainer: Dan Skelton Owner: Colm Donlon

Grade 1 Ladbrokes Kauto Star Novices' Chase 3m, Kempton Park: 26th Dec 2020

Kempton's two-day Christmas cracker saw Dan and Harry Skelton bag a couple of significant prizes and with forcing tactics applied, Shan Blue maintained his unbeaten record over fences in this Grade 1 contest. Producing an exhibition round of fluency, particularly in the home straight, the matter was finally sealed when his pursuer The Big Breakaway clattered through the final fence, the winner benefiting from a typically confident ride.

NUBE NEGRA Trainer: Dan Skelton Owner: Terry Spraggett

Grade 2 Ladbrokes Desert Orchid Chase 2m, Kempton Park: 27th Dec 2020

Much attention here pre-race centred upon the return to action of the brilliant Altior, but it was Nube Negra who caused a surprise under a brilliantly confident ride. Duc Des Genievers had led for a long way with Altior towards the rear, but as the market leader made ground it was clear others were struggling and it was Nube Negra who came out of the pack to take up the running in the home straight and go clear for a smooth win.

PROTEKTORAT Trainer: Dan Skelton Owner: Sir Alex Ferguson, Ged Mason, John Hales and Lisa Hales

Grade 1 SSS Super Alloys Manifesto Novices' Chase 2m4f, Aintree: 8th Apr 2021

Protektorat had earmarked himself as a chaser with guts when winning with a swashbuckling display at Carlisle in October, before following up at Cheltenham in November. However, following lacklustre displays in small-field contests at Wincanton and Kelso, more patient tactics were applied, coupled with the combined impact of wind surgery and a first-time tongue-tie - all served to enable Protektorat to add a first Grade 1 success to his burgeoning CV - at the same time bringing Skelton level with Brian Hughes in the jump jockeys' championship race.

MY DROGO Trainer: Dan Skelton Owner: Richard and Lizzy Kelvin-Hughes

Grade 1 Betway Mersey Novices' Hurdle 2m4f, Aintree: 10th Apr 2021

Brought along steadily this season by his trainer, My Drogo maintained his unbeaten record over hurdles with the biggest success of his career. Skelton had opted for the Grade 2 Premier Hurdle at Kelso instead of a flagship novice hurdles at the Cheltenham Festival, and with that Kelso form subsequently franked My Drogo was a well-supported 5-4 favourite here. Courtesy of some fine leaps, Harry Skelton had his mount in pole position from the third-last flight and his willing partner powered clear.



2020/21 JUMP JOCKEYS' CHAMPIONSHIP DEFENDING CHAMPION

BRIAN HUGHES



STATS



BORN: JUNE 27, 1985
(AGE 35 YEARS)



LIVES IN: NORTH YORKSHIRE



MARRIED TO: LUCI
(CHILDREN RORY & OLIVIA)



FIRST IRISH (FLAT) WINNER:
PERUGINO LADY,
DOWNPATRICK, OCT 9, 2002



**FIRST BRITISH (JUMP)
WINNER:** BOB JUSTICE,
WETHERBY, DEC 3, 2005



1000TH WINNER: MY OLD
GOLD, WETHERBY
JAN 3, 2019



HONOURS: CHAMPION
CONDITIONAL JOCKEY
2007/08, CHAMPION
JOCKEY 2019/20

On his rivals:

"Richard Johnson is retired and now I'm up against the new generation, led by Harry Skelton and also Harry Cobden, until his recent injury. If you were competing with Dickie, you always knew you were doing a lot of things right as he was such a good benchmark. But Harry Skelton is having a great season and riding well. He's doing fantastic and fair play to him."

On life as the reigning champion:

"I certainly don't get recognised when I'm out and about on my rare days off! Obviously, I started out the new season wanting to be champion again and I got a lot of pride from the type of people that got in touch when I won the championship. Jonjo O'Neill, who was the last Northern champion before me, sent a message to say, 'well done', as did Sir AP McCoy, Davy Russell and plenty of others.

"They are people that I have always admired, and I'd say that meant more to me than all the media attention I received, which is not something I crave anyway! It was genuinely satisfying to know that legends like that thought I had done an okay job.

"Over the years you always get a bit of fan mail now and again but after I was champion, I received a lovely letter from a fan saying that he had watched me riding for a long time and was very impressed; and would I mind signing the pictures he'd enclosed - the only problem was the photos were of the likes of Altior and Might Bite and it was meant for Nico De Boinville! I actually sent them on

to Nico and we had a good laugh about it."

On the final push to be champion again this season:

"My agent Richard Hale has done a great job, as have all my trainers and all the owners that support me and all the staff that work in the yards day in and day out to prepare the horses so brilliantly.

"I also have a lot of encouragement from people wishing me well and rooting for me. I'm certainly giving it my best shot and if I'm not champion again, it won't be because I haven't tried hard enough.

"I've been all over the country and I always feel I've given 100 per cent every day and I'm trying my best, as is Harry - we're all trying our very best and that's all we can do."

JUMP JOCKEYS' CHAMPIONSHIP 2020/2021 TOP FIVE

| JOCKEY | WINS |
|--------------------|------|
| Harry Skelton | 150 |
| Brian Hughes | 140 |
| Harry Cobden | 123 |
| Nico de Boinville | 83 |
| Sam Twiston-Davies | 82 |

*Stats correct as of pre-racing on 22nd April

FIVE KEY WINNING RIDES

IN THE 2020/21 JUMPS SEASON

RIBBLE VALLEY **Trainer:** Nicky Richards **Owner:** David Wesley Yates
Watch Irish Racing on RacingTV.com Intermediate Hurdle 2m1f, Carlisle: 22nd Oct 2020

Fuelled by high praise heaped on his shoulders, Ribble Valley carried the hopes of almost an entire northern racing community when returning to action at Carlisle in October. Thankfully, in the shape of Brian Hughes, he had exactly the right man in the saddle. Galloping all over his rivals from the foot of the hill, Hughes let out an inch of rein, and in the words of the commentator Malcolm Tomlinson, his mount "breezed into the lead" to win going away.

SNOW LEOPARDESS **Trainer:** Charlie Longsdon **Owner:** Andrew Fox-Pitt
Class 2 Belfair Supports Safer Gambling Week Handicap Chase 3m1.5f, Haydock Park: 21st Nov 2020

In typically gruelling winter conditions at Haydock, Snow Leopardess was firmly on the back foot on her third start over fences (and also her handicap debut) following a significant final-circuit blunder. Still four lengths behind, and under pressure, jumping the final fence she looked set for second place, until lifted home in the shadow of the post under an ultra-determined ride which served testament to the level of skill, strength, guile and dedication required from any champion.

LAKE VIEW LAD **Trainer:** Nick Alexander **Owner:** Trevor Hemmings
Grade 2 William Hill Many Clouds Chase 3m1f, Aintree: 5th Dec 2020

As a previous Rehearsal Chase (Newcastle) and Rowland Meyrick (Wetherby) hero, Nick Alexander's gallant grey Lake View Lad had already built a core following among jumps racing fans. Here, he emulated the feat of Many Clouds (2016) in carrying the Trevor Hemmings silks to victory in this contest. With the low sun leading to the omission of all three fences in the home straight, this race developed an unexpected tactical element requiring Flat speed in the finish, but Hughes had kept enough up his sleeve to repel strong-staying rivals.

SAM'S ADVENTURE **Trainer:** Brian Ellison **Owner:** Phil & Julie Martin
Class 2 Belfair Tommy Whittle Chase 3m1.5f, Haydock Park: 19th Dec 2020

The season had started moderately for Sam's Adventure and Brian Hughes was actually aboard the winner when Brian Ellison's charge had toiled over course and distance the previous month. However, with a smooth ride up the inner here, the horse hardly even knew he was in a competitive race until after the penultimate fence, when his response to being asked to go and win the race was instantaneous.

BAREBACK JACK **Trainer:** Donald McCain **Owner:** Tim Leslie
Bet365 Scottish Supreme Novices' Hurdle 1m7.5f, Musselburgh: 7th Feb 2021

Despite not being a natural front-runner, Bareback Jack made all to bring up the 100th winner of the season for Brian Hughes in the Scottish Supreme Novices' Hurdle on day two of the Cheltenham Trials weekend at Musselburgh. The reigning champion had thrown down the gauntlet to his major rivals by this stage of the season, being 16 and 20 winners ahead of Harry Cobden and Harry Skelton respectively.



CHAMPION CONDITIONAL JUMP JOCKEY DANNY McMENAMIN

While the jump jockeys' title race could yet go down to the very final fixtures of the season, the story could not have been more different in the challenge to become champion conditional, with 20-year-old Danny McMEnamin having had the title in safe keeping for some time.

Making a quick impact has been a hallmark of his career to this point. McMEnamin only arrived on these shores towards the end of 2017, but his first ride for boss and strong supporter Nicky Richards came in March 2018 and resulted in a short-head victory.

The following season, he notched 16 victories, then last season it was 28. This season he has built on those efforts to ride **45 winners*** for well over a dozen different trainers and at racecourses all around the Midlands, the North and Scotland.

McMenamin's introduction to racing came through a family friend who had a couple of point-to-pointers and visits to his local racecourse at Downpatrick, where his uncle was manager.

A summer spent riding work with Ger Lyons helped polish his technique and a chat with Grand National hero Tony Dobbin opened the door for him to head to Penrith and join the team at Richards' famous Greystoke yard.

His parents, Dennis and Brenda, might have been no big fans of racing themselves, but they've watched plenty of races in the last couple of years as they have followed Danny's progress through the ranks.

"Things got off to a good start and I've been lucky to have people looking out for me and I've kept picking up some nice rides," McMEnamin reflects. "Nicky is a great man to work for and he has supported me in giving me the chance to ride out at other yards as well. When things go well, he will tell you not to get ahead of yourself, but when things aren't going so well, he will be there with encouragement."

"Riding Nuts Well to win the Old Roan Chase at Aintree in October was a real highlight, as he has been such a great horse to build an association with and Ann and Ian Hamilton, who have been great supporters of mine."

McMenamin becomes the third northern-based rider to win the title in the last eight years and admits to finding inspiration from the achievements of weighing-room colleague Brian Hughes and his efforts to retain the full jump jockeys' championship.

"I can't say enough good things about Brian and the rest of the lads," he says. "I have a huge amount of respect for Brian and the way he rides. He has been really good to me whenever I've had a question or something I've needed to talk about."



NAME: Danny McMEnamin

BORN: June 5, 2000 (age 20 years)

LIVES IN: Penrith, Cumbria

FIRST WINNER: Western Rules, Ayr, March 9, 2018

BIGGEST WINNER: Nuts Well, Old Roan Chase (Grade 2), Aintree, Oct 25, 2020

FAVOURITE RACECOURSE: Carlisle – "It's our local track, but it's also a really good test of jumping"

AMBITIONS: "Winning the Grand National has always been the dream since I first started riding."

CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' CHAMPIONSHIP 2020/2021 TOP FIVE

| JOCKEY | WINS |
|-----------------|------|
| Danny McMEnamin | 45 |
| Bryan Carver | 31 |
| Jordan Nailor | 29 |
| Charlie Hammond | 29 |
| Max Kendrick | 29 |

*Stats correct as of pre-racing on 22nd April

Another source of support throughout the year has been McMEnamin's British Horseracing Authority jockey coach Brian Harding - himself a lynchpin for so many years at Nicky Richards' yard and the rider of more than 600 winners.

"Like me, Brian came over from Ireland and he knows what it's like," Danny explains. "He has helped improve my riding; and helped me develop physically and mentally. My fitness is better than ever - he understands the game. He knows that you have good days and bad days, but it's how you deal with the good days and take positives from the tricky days."

That sense of balance, combined with a quiet sense of focus and determination, can only continue to serve Danny McMEnamin well over the years ahead, whatever they may hold.

SEASONAL TOTALS OF WINNERS:

2017/18 **1** 2018/19 **16** 2019/20 **28** 2020/21 **45***

THREE KEY WINNERS IN DANNY McMENAMIN'S CAREER

Nietzsche

Greatwood Hurdle
Cheltenham / Nov 18th 2018

A breakthrough big-race success for McMEnamin at a time when he had partnered just a handful of winners - Nietzsche showed that the jockey was in possession of adaptability and a cool head, as low sun meant that a few flights were excluded.

The five-year-old, without a win over jumps in 11 starts since January 2017, stayed on with great determination to foil Silver Streak by a neck.

"Winning any race at Cheltenham was always going to be special, but that was a dream," said Danny.

Archie Brown

British Racing Novice
Handicap Chase
Market Rasen / Feb 21st 2021

Just an ordinary contest on a run-of-the-mill raceday, but victory here represented a key landmark to McMEnamin as Harry Hogarth's 25-1 winner was his 75th success and marked the jockey's graduation from the conditional ranks and the loss of his allowance.

"I wasn't focused too hard on trying to ride a particular number of winners this season, but in terms of timing, it seemed it was about right to lose my claim and try to kick things on. It was something that plenty of jockeys don't manage to achieve, but to do that and get the championship as well was the cherry on the cake."

Nuts Well

Old Roan Chase
Aintree / Oct 25th 2020

Nuts Well may have been sent off at 16-1 for this Grade 2, but his rider lacked no confidence in his mount's prospects and the pair steadily made ground throughout the final mile to win going away from Clondaw Castle.

"Ian and Ann Hamilton have been very good to me and I already loved this horse, as I had ridden him five times and won four going into the race," explained McMEnamin. "I thought he had a great chance, even though I knew it was going to be his toughest task. He's been a brilliant horse to me and who knows, he might still have more successes in him to come."

OTHER CONDITIONALS TO ENJOY A BIG SEASON IN 2020/21



BRYAN CARVER

The Cork-born rider has enjoyed an injury-free campaign and ridden for a variety of stables, while still remaining attached to the yard of champion trainer Paul Nicholls. Three wins aboard exciting novice Grumpy Charley for Chris Honour and success in a big handicap chase for the boss on Magic Saint at Cheltenham's Open Meeting were among the highlights. He will be back to throw down another challenge for the title.



JORDAN NAILOR

A best-ever season for the Cotswolds-based rider, who first made an impression as a teenager in point-to-points. His progression in the saddle – under the tutelage of Team Twiston-Davies – saw him land a first Graded victory aboard Beauport in the EBF Final at Sandown. "He's a very confident jockey and he's riding really well," said Nigel Twiston-Davies afterwards. "He's already as good as many of the professionals and hopefully he can keep it up."

CHAMPION JUMP TRAINER PAUL NICHOLLS



BORN: April 17, 1962 in Gloucestershire

RIDING CAREER: 130 winners between 1980 and 1989, including two wins in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup

FIRST WINNER AS A TRAINER: Olveston, Hereford, Dec 20, 1991

HONOURS: 11-time Champion Jumps trainer in Britain (2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2018/19)

3000TH CAREER WINNER AS A TRAINER: Capitaine, Taunton, Feb 19, 2019

CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL WINNERS: 45, including four Gold Cups



'HUNGER AND SELF-SACRIFICE' THE HALLMARKS OF PAUL NICHOLLS AS HE CLAIMS TWELFTH TRAINERS' CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

A trip to Paul Nicholls' stables in Ditcheat sealed Sir Alex Ferguson's decision to become involved with the man who will be crowned champion trainer for the twelfth time this week.

The renowned former football manager, who's success with Manchester United make him a legendary figure in the sport for decades still to come, had watched Rock Of Gibraltar triumph in his colours on the Flat at the highest level, but was ready for a different kind of ownership experience.

Through his son, Jason, he was introduced to Ged Mason, who suggested that a trip to meet Nicholls might help him better understand what the trainer could offer. Together, he and Mason bought the chaser What A Friend, who went on to win two Grade 1's and chased home Denman in the 2009 Hennessy, one of the most memorable jumps races of

its generation.

Now firmly in retirement from football management, Ferguson's jumps racing interests have expanded and at Aintree earlier this month horses he part-owned with friends bagged all three Grade 1's on the opening day of the meeting.

Celebrations were a little more muted than they might have been, and it was only through a Perspex screen that the owners were able to talk to Nicholls on the winner's podium, but there was still a sense of business as usual in at least one respect.

"It wasn't long before he was trying to sell us another horse, but that's Paul – he never stops," says Ferguson. "A couple of things always impress me about him.

"One is that I am always amazed by his hunger. People often say we are alike and I think there is some truth in that. If you're like Paul, you're never really satisfied and no matter what you achieve, you're always looking forward to the next challenge.

"To achieve the results he has done this season without any absolute superstars is a testament to him and the team. He's got no Kauto Star, no Denman, but he's really built something special at Ditcheat and anyone who has been there will know what I mean.

"The other thing that I think some don't understand is the sacrifice. Every morning, you're with the horses. Every afternoon, you're at the races. Every day, you're planning and plotting the right races or talking to owners or your team. There's just no rest."

This is an ingredient that Ferguson understands better than most.

"I sacrificed my life – there's no other way of looking at it," he says. "For 39 years, I was a manager. I think about my time at St Mirren, Aberdeen, going to matches, watching the opposition, the training sessions. I will always be grateful to my wife for bringing up our three children when I couldn't be around. That intensity can wear you down, but Paul's a lot younger than me and I don't think he's going anywhere."

Consistency in performance has been the bedrock upon

which Paul Nicholls has built his success as a trainer. It is now a staggering 25 years since he ended the season with a winning strike-rate of worse than 20%. Many trainers will not manage to achieve such a wins-to-runs ratio across a whole career.

The horses who have contributed the most to this season's prize-money haul are an interesting mix of proven chasing talent (Frodon, Clan Des Obeaux and Politologue), along with the future star potential offered by the likes of Monmiral and Bravemansgame.

"You've always got to have half an eye on the future and I'm already excited about next season," says the trainer. "But I'm proud of what we have achieved this season – both in terms of prize money and number of winners – considering that we lost a couple of months early on when there was no racing. Hopefully we'll get the chance to celebrate some of those successes as a team at some point in the summer before it all gets going again."

FIVE MOST SUCCESSFUL HORSES THIS SEASON

FRODON Owner: Paul Vogt Season Form: 1415 Total Earnings: **£161,437**

Widely regarded as one of the most popular partnerships in the sport of jump racing, it was fitting that Frodon and Bryony Frost should top the bill in the Ladbrokes King George VI Chase at Kempton Park on Boxing Day. Despite jumping out to the left, Frodon made all, keeping enough in reserve to hold off the late challenge from Waiting Patiently. Ultimately found wanting for stamina in the WellChild Cheltenham Gold Cup when fifth, Frodon nevertheless showed all of his enthusiasm and jumping prowess; and could yet sign off his term at Sandown on the final day of the season.

CLAN DES OBEAUX Owner: Mr & Mrs Paul Barber, Ged Mason & Sir Alex Ferguson Season Form: 2321 Total Earnings: **£150,448**

Clan Des Obeaux posted a pleasing effort when second on his seasonal reappearance in the Betfair Chase at Haydock. However, he was more laboured when seeking a hat-trick of wins in the King George VI Chase at Kempton Park on Boxing Day. After being narrowly denied by front-running stablemate Secret Investor in the Denman Chase at Newbury in February, and granted the addition of first-time cheekpieces, Clan Des Obeaux stamped his authority over eight rivals to win the valuable Grade 1 Betway Bowl at Aintree, showing his class from start to finish when winning by an ever-widening 26 lengths.



POLITOLOGUE Owner: John Hales Season Form: 124 Total Earnings: **£100,527**

In some respects a case of what might have been this season for Politologue, but we must hope that he will be back again for another campaign and can show his true colours then. The select few who enjoyed the privilege to be present at Sandown Park for the Grade 1 Belfair Tingle Creek Chase will fondly recall a near foot perfect display of jumping from this dashing front-running grey, who never gave his rivals a chance to settle into their stride.

MONMIRAL Owner: Sir Alex Ferguson, Ged Mason, John Hales and Lisa Hales Season Form: 1111
Total Earnings: **£84,186**

Monmiral arrived at Ditcheat after winning a conditions hurdle in France. Deeply impressive on his British debut at Exeter, he took the step up in grade in his stride when readily justifying favouritism in the Summit Juvenile Hurdle at Doncaster in December. Next a winner at Haydock, then the decision was made to bypass the Triumph Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival in favour of the Grade 1 Anniversary Hurdle at Aintree - that patience was duly rewarded with his highest-profile success to date. He heads into the summer unbeaten and a possible Champion Hurdle candidate for next year.

MASTER TOMMYTUCKER Owner: A G (Tony) Fear Season Form: 2117126 Total Earnings: **£84,186**

Jumping has always proved the achilles heel for the talented but headstrong Master Tommytucker. Nevertheless, in 2020-21 he has enjoyed a productive and busy season netting over £80,000 towards the Paul Nicholls prize fund. Well clear and with the race at his mercy, he reached for the final fence, giving rider Harry Cobden a major scare when winning the Silviniaco Conti Chase at Kempton Park in January. Arguably an even finer effort followed when runner-up to Dashed Drasher in the Grade 1 Belfair Chase at Ascot.



TRAINERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 2020/2021 TOP FIVE

| TRAINER | PRIZE MONEY |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Paul Nicholls | £2,338,524 |
| Dan Skelton | £1,836,694 |
| Henry de Bromhead | £1,514,072 |
| Nicky Henderson | £1,420,131 |
| Jonjo O'Neill | £910,544 |

*Stats correct as of pre-racing on 22nd April



NORTHERN JUMP JOCKEY OF THE YEAR

BRIAN HUGHES



Another brilliant season for Brian Hughes means he has once again dominated the division in the Northern Jump Jockeys' Championship and he claims the title by a comprehensive margin.

The Northern Jump Jockey of the Year is determined by which jockey rides the most winners at the 15 British racecourses from Market Rasen northwards.

That is very much home territory for North Yorkshire-based Hughes, who has registered feature-race successes such as Lake View Lad's triumph in the Many Clouds Chase at Aintree and the victory of Sam's Adventure in the Tommy Whittle Chase at Haydock Park in the north of England in the north of England. Musselburgh racecourse in Scotland has provided Hughes with more victories (15) than any

other track this season.

Perhaps this season's Champion Conditional, Danny McMenamin, could be one to challenge him in the future, but he and Hughes are far from the only northern-based riders to have enjoyed excellent seasons.

In his 15th season with a licence, Sean Quinlan registered a best-ever tally of winners, highlighted by the Sky Bet Chase success of Takingrisks for Nicky Richards.

While Ryan Mania reinforced his welcome return to the sport by riding Vintage Clouds to a marvellous Cheltenham Festival success for Sue and Smith in the Paddy Power Plate.



NORTHERN JUMP JOCKEY OF THE YEAR 2020/2021 TOP FIVE

| JOCKEY | WINS |
|-----------------|------|
| Brian Hughes | 109 |
| Sean Quinlan | 58 |
| Danny McMenamin | 44 |
| Ryan Mania | 38 |
| Conor O'Farrell | 36 |

*Stats correct as of pre-racing on 22nd April



CHAMPION JUMP OWNER JP McMANUS



“MOST GENEROUS
HUMAN BEING” IS
CHAMPION OWNER
AGAIN

JP McManus claims his 14th Champion Owner title, with the incredible Randox Grand National victory of Minella Times the cherry on the cake for the sport's single most influential and most successful patron in British jumps racing.

It was the Cheltenham Festival success of Mister Donovan in 1982 that helped sow a seed of love for British and Irish jumps racing in McManus and wife Noreen, who that year bought Martinstown Stud in County Limerick, his home county. His passion for the sport has remained undimmed ever since.

A former bookmaker at his local greyhound track, the love of a good gamble landed has never left McManus, but far beyond that, his green-and-gold hooped colours have been carried to success in almost every big race in the sport and by a number of the most popular horses in recent times, as well as some of the most celebrated jockeys in the sport.

A longstanding ally is John Francome, who rode Mister Donovan for McManus nearly 40 years ago. The pair have remained friends ever since, most recently through Francome's role as a vice-patron and former President of the Injured Jockeys Fund.

“Racing is incredibly lucky to have JP and he is without question the most generous human being I have come across in my time in the sport,” he says.

“He is a massive supporter of the IJF and every other racing charity that you can think of, but as well as that he is very much a ‘people’ person, who gets to know people and wants to do his best for them. When any other owner would have walked away, he is the one that will remain loyal. When he buys a horse from a stable he hasn't been involved with before, he invariably wants to keep the horse there and support them.

“Most of all though, he is a brilliant loser. You will never hear him moan whatever happens on the racecourse. “That was disappointing” is about the most he'll ever say.

“God knows how many horses he has got in training these days. Maybe even he doesn't know, but the care he puts into looking after them, even in retirement, is incredible. If I die and come back as a horse, I'd love to be one that was owned by him as they get only the very best.”

As ever, McManus, the most successful owner in the history of the Cheltenham Festival, ended the season with winners at all the major meetings, including Chantry House's victories in Grade 1 novice chases at Cheltenham and Aintree. Owning the first and third-placed horses in the Randox Grand National helped bring his total prize-money haul well over a £1million clear of second-placed Simon Munir and Isaac Souede.

SIX MOST SUCCESSFUL HORSES THIS SEASON

MINELLA TIMES Trainer: Henry De Bromhead Season Form: 1221 Total Earnings: **£375,000**

Minella Times and Rachael Blackmore etched their names in indelible ink in the annals of Grand National history. After a stellar Cheltenham Festival, Blackmore stole all of the headlines again as she became the first ever female rider to win the Grand National.

FAKIR D'OUDAIRIES Trainer: Joseph Patrick O'Brien Season Form: 2P221 Total Earnings: **£162,378**

Fakir D'Oudairies spent the first half of the season competing in Ireland, including when second to Chacun Pour Soi in the Grade 1 Dublin Chase at Leopardstown. His valuable contributions to McManus's tally in Britain came firstly when finishing runner-up to the exciting Allaho in the Ryanair Chase at Cheltenham, and secondly as a convincing winner of the Marsh Chase at Aintree.

CHANTRY HOUSE Trainer: Nicky Henderson Season Form: 13111 Total Earnings: **£135,515**

Chantry House has come into his own over fences, winning four of his five starts. After taking small-field affairs with ease at Ascot and Wetherby, he proved himself to be a Grade 1 performer at the Cheltenham Festival with a fluent display of jumping in the 2m4f Marsh Novices' Chase. He completed a top-level double when following up in the 3m1f Mildmay Novices' Chase at Aintree.

EPATANTE Trainer: Nicky Henderson Season Form: 123 Total Earnings: **£104,061**

The 2020 Champion Hurdle heroine embarked upon her new season with a scintillating display of pace and power in the Fighting Fifth Hurdle at Newcastle in November, and all seemed on track until her shock defeat to Silver Streak at Kempton on Boxing Day. That left her trainer Nicky Henderson seeking some answers ahead of the 2021 Unibet Champion Hurdle, where she ultimately ran a fine race, albeit finding the progressive Honeysuckle (and Sharjah) too strong.

TIME TO GET UP Trainer: Jonjo O'Neill Season Form: 3411 Total Earnings: **£79,304**

Having never been sent over fences when trained by Joseph O'Brien, Time To Get Up kicked off his season when third at Aintree in November. After a modest showing at Wetherby on Boxing Day, he bounced back to develop into a most progressive staying chaser. A win at Wincanton in February was a precursor to a crack at the Midlands Grand National at Uttoxeter, where he dug deep to reel in Lucinda Russell's Mighty Thunder.

ANY SECOND NOW Trainer: Ted Walsh Season Form: 99P13 Total Earnings: **£75,000**

Ted Walsh (father of Ruby and Katie Walsh) saddled Papillon to Aintree glory in 2000 and with Any Second Now he also played a key role in the Irish domination of the 2021 Grand National. He had shown much improved form in winning a Grade 2 at Navan in March, and in backing up at Aintree with an unlucky-in-running third place, he added a further £75,000 to an ever-growing JP McManus prize fund.





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