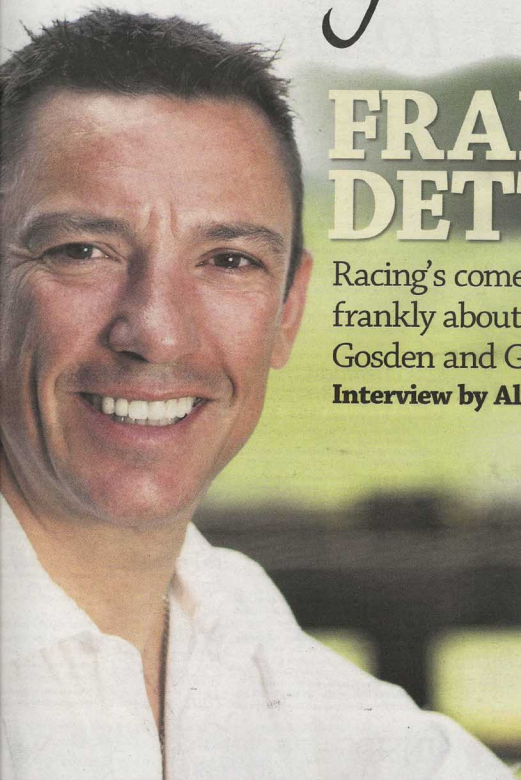


# P Sunday

**RACING POST**

Sunday, June 28, 2015



## FRANKIE DETTORI

Racing's comeback king talks frankly about Godolphin, Gosden and Golden Horn  
**Interview by Alastair Down**

### S NALD

The globetrotting jockey tells us what he had for breakfast

### TANYA STEVENSON

The first lady of the betting ring on her favourite horse



### TOP NOTCH TONTO

The story of the much-loved northern miler



### JAMES MILTON

Deeply unnerved by the stars on show at the Copa America



# THE SUNDAY REVIEW

Our guide to what racing fans can look forward to reading, seeing and watching

**The Irish Derby: Celebrating the 150th Running of Ireland's Greatest Race**

**Sean Magee (with Guy St John Williams and Francis Hyland)**

£20, published by Racing Post – shop.racingpost.com

## Colourful characters create rich history

**T**HE story of the Irish Derby is brought to life by Sean Magee in this anniversary publication through the stories of the people who transformed the race into an international event of renown, though some of the characters sketched in the book are more than a little shady. "They are a lying, perjured, rum-sold and libidinous lot," decreed preacher Dr Charles Parkhurst of the Tammany Hall led by Richard Boss Croker. Officially an Irish labour organisation, Tammany Hall was a byword for corruption in late 19th century New York. When Croker tried of racketeering, bribery and blackmail he returned eventually to the country from which his family had fled after the Famine. But it was to Glencairn, County Dublin and not to his native Cork that the Boss returned – and he also purchased Ballymacoll Stud, the Meath farm that would eventually supply Classic winners for the Weinstock breeding operation.

A fallings-out with his trainer JI Parkison in late 1906 led to the chestnut colt Orby and Boss Croker's other horses being dumped at Kildare train station. It was from Glencairn that Orby was prepared for his three-

year-old season and the Boss saw his horse win the Derby. In keeping with what Croker saw as the high-handed treatment meted out to him by Newmarket's Jockey Club when he originally bought a yard at Warrage before relocating to Dublin, King Edward VII refused to invite the winning owner to the royal box.

Doncaster's St Leger had been the plan for Orby but the bonfires and mass crowds that greeted the Derby hero on his return to Ireland after the royal stud persuaded Boss Croker that Orby should run in the Irish Derby.

The paltry prize-money in comparison with Epsom prompted him to offer the Turf Club sponsorship, on the condition that he could become a member. Even a case of champagne delivered to the members could not sway them, although they did keep the gift. Orby still ran and became the first horse to complete the Derby double.

Others who have played prominent roles in the story of the Irish Derby, such as Joe McGrath, Vincent O'Brien and Aidan O'Brien, are given similar in-depth treatment by Magee in this celebratory offering.

While we may crib about merchandising and the

commercialisation of sport, long before replica jerseys filled half the space in a sports shop the Irish Sweeps Derby had cornered the market in spin-off goods. The tin of biscuits featuring drawings of jockeys bedecked in the colours of Ireland's leading owners of the 1960s is reproduced in the book and was just one of a number of novel promotional ideas dreamed up by Joe McGrath.

The book relies heavily on the research undertaken by Ireland's leading racing historians, Guy St John Williams and Francis P M Hyland, in their seminal publication *The Irish Derby 1866-1979*. In bringing the story up to date, Magee has produced a book chock-full of gems from the history of the Irish Derby along with a treasure trove of photographs – particularly those of Jacqueline O'Brien, who also wrote the foreword – prints and reproductions of cards, form and maps.

The final section of the book gives the winner of each one of the 149 Irish Derbys and complete results of every renewal since 1962. What this loving tribute to the race illustrates is that horses make races and the Carragh makes champions.

Aisling Crowe

## Broad canvas of racing in all its glory

**Hubert de Watrigant exhibition**

Osborne Studio Gallery, 2 Motcomb Street, London SW1X 8JU  
Until Friday, July 10 – osg.uk.com

**I**T'S possible you've come across the work of Hubert de Watrigant without knowing it: perhaps while you've been leafing through your collection of Hermes scarves, lunching with HM The Queen or enjoying a fish supper with Baron and Baroness von Ullmann, as you do.

The highly collectible Frenchman – born into a renowned equestrian family in the Gallic south-west – has a list of commissions and admirers that stretches from Al Thani to Yoshida via Fabre and Magnier, but that shouldn't lure you into thinking he's a glory painter, on the well-worn trail of the big horses and the big moments at the prestige meetings.

Sir Peter O'Sullivan has spoken of "the art of the choreographer" in relation to De Watrigant and his "fluid, ballet-like interpretations" of the racing day, comprised not of form-book moments but of hidden detail. The artist himself explains: "I have a tendency to pick up my binoculars when others put them down."

In his latest one-man show at the Osborne Studio Gallery, the 61-year-old trains his eye on the fleeting, formative moments that make up the relationships underpinning the Turf, from the intent and insistent council of war between trainer and rider in Final Instructions (the rider, of



**Sun La Plage: splash of colour that encapsulates extreme pleasures**

course, is doing his best to look angry, or probably won't take any notice), to the nuanced series of last-minute preparations that make up *Eude de Jockeys*.

At the main events and in the famous stinks, De Watrigant focuses less on the triumph and more on the universal rhythms that bring the sport together and the idiosyncrasies that set one protagonist apart from another. It's a sensibility that means he's as evocative at the gaff tracks as he is in the grand arenas.

Thus, his Cheltenham is an intimate exchange between riders (Roger Brookhouse's first and second colours, if I'm not mistaken, although of

course it doesn't really matter) wrapped up in their own professional cocoon, while his Warwick and Sur La Plage are splashes of colour that encapsulate the extreme pleasures the moderate and the provincial can bring to the racing world.

There are other creatures as well – his Sabonero is a monolithic slab of bovine muscle whose field you wouldn't cross without very good reason – and rich detail delivered in everything from gouache and old bits of the Racing Post on everything from gold paper to cardboard, but the spirit of the show is horses and their people in their deftly captured element.

Peter Thomas

COMING UP IN THE RACING POST

TOMORROW

**PETER MAKIN**

The retiring trainer talks to Steve Dennis about his illustrious career



TUESDAY

**JACK BERRY**

The northern legend looks back at a lifetime in the sport, culminating in the house that bears his name



WEDNESDAY

**UNLUCKY PUNTS**



A four-part series featuring some agonising near-misses from the likes of Dave Nevison, Alex Bird – and readers