

Peter Swann Gimcrack Dinner Speech , Tuesday 12th December 2017

My Lord President, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am absolutely delighted to stand here and deliver a speech on behalf of The Coolsilk Partnership, which in all honesty, up until a few years ago was made up of Barbara and myself and now has become very much a larger family affair with my wife Karin and two sons Christopher and William very much onboard.

We would like to thank all of those involved in achieving our first Gimcrack winner, Sands of Mali, most importantly Richard Fahey, all at the yard and of course Paul Hanagan for an excellent sit and of course Al Basti Equiworld for their sponsorship and support.

Being a breeze up horse makes him an unusual winner of this particular race and even more so with his breeding, as “ Who the hell is Panis” rang out from the broadcasters as he won and a giggle from Hayley Turner as she got the sires name slightly wrong. That actually could have been even more embarrassing as our original name for him was “ Cons’ Big Panis” in recognition of Con Marnane who prepared and sold the colt to us at The Ascot Breeze ups in March of this year and the size of the horse! We had bought Prince of Lir from Con the previous year and won the Norfolk Stakes, so it can only go downhill from here as Con is now in “ A Different League!!”.

We have had an amazing year for a small family ownership with 8 Two year old winners, 20 winners in total for the season and over £400,000.00 in prize money. More renowned for many years as an all weather owner with horses such as Cool Sands, Sahara Silk, Tartatartufarta, Oriental relation and Royal Bajan to name but a few. Bajan was our first major breeze up buy for Ascot, only to be injured at two and later win 17 races on the all weather and turf. We now concentrate on early types and the major two year old races on the back of our record of over 300 winners in our career as race horse owners. On that I would like to thank our current team of trainers, especially James Given for his veterinary advice at the sales and for being our long-standing trainer and Bloodstock expert, Matt Coleman.

I was asked if there were many comparisons with my other love which is being the Chairman of a football league club, in particular, between footballers and horses, well surprisingly there is as follows:

We try and buy athletic, good moving, fit horses as we do footballers. If they move well, have no major injuries and have a forward going mentality it ticks a lot of boxes for both players and horses. However some have vices, in horses we have windsuckers, cribbers,

weavers and a lot need headgear, rugs and blindfolds to go into the stalls. In football we have dribblers who should pass, passers who should dribble, goal scorers who don't score and defenders who can't defend. Some need help and wear gloves, tights and support equipment along with a few who would benefit from a stall handler pushing them onto the pitch in the cold depths of winter. The one telling connection is neither a footballer or horse has won mastermind and you can make your own conclusions from that!

Going forward with Sands of Mali we hope to compete in the major 6 and 7 furlong 3 year old races of 2018, although we haven't ruled out the Guineas in Ireland or France. We were unsure after his run at Newmarket where to go, but after our first trip to the Breeders Cup in Del Mar and his performance there, it looks like the Group One Commonwealth Cup will be the main aim. Let's not forget the performance here, beating some very speedy horses in an excellent time, the clock never lies.

On a separate note, the rise in people gambling on sporting events has been astronomical and having a bet on an event in play is growing. Utilising your mobile phone to bet has transformed the industry and I would just ask that all sport associated with gambling and all bookmakers and institutions involved in supplying the service to gamble get together and formulate a way of ensuring money comes back into those sports to look after the gamblers who struggle with a fun bet and have an addiction. Horse racing should be at the forefront of this and rather than a voluntary system I would like to see a percentage contracted back into the sport specifically for the support and protection of compulsive gamblers and I gather that is already gaining momentum as we speak.

I hope we can make a difference as a sport going forward all ask that we now raise our glasses, as I propose a toast to the health of British Racing and to Sands of Mali, the winner of The Al Basti Equiworld Gimcrack Stakes 2017

Ed Chamberlin Gimcrack Dinner Speech, Tuesday 12th December 2017

My Lord President, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you President for that kind and generous introduction. What an honour it is to be invited to speak to such a distinguished gathering. I have done a little research on the task I face this evening and Michael Seth-Smith's book about this famous dinner, it says that in 1767 when the dinner was launched, the invitation by the York Race Committee, or Gimcrack Club, was given to speakers because they were polite hosts rather than attentive listeners. Looking around the room, I'm rather hoping that some 250 years later – little has changed. The book also credits the Earl of Durham for one of the great Gimcrack Dinner speeches in 1877 when he effectively accused the Senior Steward of the Jockey Club of cheating.

I don't plan to be quite as controversial as that but I do hope to raise some thoughts and ideas after 18 years working in football and now at the end of my first 12 months working in horseracing and ITV's first year broadcasting racing after a 30 year absence.

What a year it has been. On a personal level, I made a great decision to swap Premier League football for this wonderful sport. But it's just a single year on what – hopefully – will be a very long journey.

I must start by thanking those in racing for welcoming ITV with open arms and all the support we have received up and down the country through the year. It was summed up here at York at the Dante Meeting in May, when Lord Grimthorpe – or "Teddy G" as one of my colleagues may call him – approached me on the presenting podium and asked what more York could do to help.

That support is so appreciated and I sense you, William Derby and the excellent team here at York, have a similar ethos to us at ITV Racing: namely, the importance of teamwork but also a passionate desire and determination to broaden the popularity of horseracing. To modernise and engage. It's early days and so far we've only scratched the surface but there is so much we can do to move this sport forward and increase its popularity. But to do that we need your help.

In 2001, another man who came from football – after considerably more success it must be said! – stood here and said the following

“We all know how magical racing can be, but we must initiate many more to that magic. We need to create the space to involve more people and crucially, we need to be seen to be less exclusive. There are still substantial pockets of resistance to progress in racing, groups who cling to the notion that the deepest pleasures of the turf should be the private preserve of the few.”

Has anything changed in the sixteen years since Sir Alex Ferguson said those words here at York? I’m not sure.

For starters, we have to accept that to the majority of people, horseracing is a foreign language. A language that intimidates and restricts. Bar the off-side rule, football is simple. A ball. Two goals and eleven players on each team that can be played anywhere.

In contrast, racing needs to demystifying. Our ITV jargon busters have gone down well, as do similar racecard glossaries here and at other tracks, but there is so much more we can all do to arm people with the knowledge that they need to fully engage with all aspects of our sport.

Some frown on concerts that are now so popular at race meetings in the summer. To me they offer a perfect opportunity to educate people about our sport, engage them in our sport, and entice them to come racing again. Critics will say those in attendance have no interest in the racing and purely come to see the music and arrive long after the racing has started. I don’t buy that. On Shergar Cup Day, for example, which has the most diverse crowd of the entire year, 84% of the 31,000 crowd was on site before the first race, I understand there was a similar profile for the sell out day here on the Knavesmire this July, courtesy of Olly Murs and the innovative Jump Jockeys Nunthorpe.

To me, these days and evenings offer the sport a perfect marketing opportunity which some courses execute well but others do not – and these new “racegoers” are left to do little more than drink. In the short-term that may swell the coffers but why not seize the longer term

opportunity. Why not take the opportunity to explain our foreign language, introduce them to the racehorse, the thrill of going racing, and entice them to come back with special offers in the programme or a voucher as they leave. Incentivise them with “introduce a friend” offers. If just 10% of the crowd return, or even spread the word about what fun going racing can be, then we are in business.

It may surprise you to hear me say this: - but racing has many advantages over football.

I have been lucky enough to present at Premier League deciders, domestic cup finals and World Cup finals yet I have been blown away by atmospheres at so many of our tracks. Royal Ascot had the lot. Epsom was like a cauldron on Derby Day and the storm on Oaks Day made for one of THE great spectacles.

The reception the Oaks heroine, Enable, then got here at York in August was so special, heartfelt from the Yorkshire people. The racing public love to embrace a star – and now many people must have returned home that evening with life-long memories to treasure and re-tell their grandchildren about the day they saw Enable on the Knavesmire.

The key for us at ITV is to make people at home feel like they are at these events. Taking them to the heart of the action. How many other sports get the incredible access that we do? The middle of the paddock, the stables, pre-parade, betting ring and down at the start. When we’ve come up with ideas – often from my unrivalled director, Paul McNamara – racecourses and their executives could not have been more helpful. Thank you.

What about the training? How exciting are football training grounds? The answer – not very. How exciting is it to watch horses first thing in the morning on the gallops? Very. Magical in fact. Just look at the crowds the open days attract at Lambourn, Malton, Epsom and Newmarket. People love feeling that they are getting to see behind the scenes. We need to convey the special way horses are looked after and the way they are trained to the wider public – especially with the opportunities presented these days by social media. As Sir Alex said: “We must initiate many more to the magic of horseracing”.

Racing is also full of wonderful stories, and so many of these stories are ones that people can relate to. In contrast, it is very hard to relate to Roman Abramovitch and the fleet of foreign

owners currently in the Premier League. Racing is different but we need more help to tell the inspiring stories of owners and syndicates. When Elite Racing won the Coolmore Nunthorpe with Marsha in that incredible finish a few yards from here, the message for me was perfect. As the owners crowded on the podium with their trophy, I was able to say on ITV: “That is what £200 can get you”. In horseracing: the dream is possible.

Likewise, the stories with stable staff. Their passion, dedication and emotion are big part of what we show on ITV. Again, these are key hooks for viewers and those interested in getting into the sport. But we need help getting these stories.

Racing has advantages but there is also plenty we can learn from football and other sports.

Sports always needs to stay trendy. To be vibrant and appeal to the young. Football never stands still. It’s always modernising. The latest innovations with the likes of Friday night football and Manchester City launching a restaurant with a one-way glass into the tunnel. In cricket the advent of 20/20 and its ever changing and hugely popular finals day. Plans are afoot to make Test Cricket more sexy. A few years ago cricket looked to be dying on its feet but its innovations, it seems to be on the rise again and set to join horseracing as one of the few sports on terrestrial television. Racing needs to do similar and get on the front foot and be less reactionary.

I’ll finish with another group crucial to engaging with viewers and the future growth of our sport: the players.

I said fans found it hard to relate to football clubs’ owners, well players are becoming ever more and more distant from supporters, the more money that pours into football. Racing could be so different.

And yet before and after a Premier League game, two players from each team are contracted to speak to the media. Media training is so important. In Australia, you cannot get your jockey’s licence without passing a media course. The one downside to a similar policy in this country would be there may never have been Lester Piggott!

My plea to all trainers would be to appreciate the benefits of not just letting their apprentices do media training – but actively encouraging them to do so and make the most of excellent opportunities available. It will help them in the future and help the sport. A few weeks ago, Oli Bell, Richard Hoiles and I went down to Paul Nicholls' yard to give his jockeys' academy some media training. It's a great initiative and I hope that other yards follow suit. The ITV team are happy to help. It is in all our interests.

So far, we have just scratched the surface with the players, the jockeys, on ITV. It is crucial in the modern age with so much information so readily available, that we tell viewers something they don't know. To be different. To give them unique insight. I believe jockeys are in the best place to do this.

Ryan Moore was brilliant to Goodwood after Winter's Nassau win. Jim Crowley and James Doyle were fascinating after their epic dual in the Coral Eclipse. Robbie Power, Jamie Spencer, Frankie Dettori, Will Buick, Ruby Walsh have all given us unique insight. Telling the viewer things no-one else can. And just look at the impact ex-jockeys Kieren Fallon, Mick Kinane and Johnny Murtagh have had on television this summer.

Yet, there is so much more I think we can do. For example, in 2018 I would love to do more of what we have tried in the last few weeks and follow another Australian innovation that is so effective in Hong Kong – namely to get quick thoughts from all the beaten jockeys after a big race. We have started to do so after big jumps races like the Betfair Chase and Ladbrokes Trophy and are keen to do more.

Of our other innovations, my favourite has been down at the start, where you can really take the viewer to the heart of the action. One of my favourite moments from the entire year was just before the Coolmore Nunthorpe – with the tension reaching fever pitch – Jim Crowley dismounted from Battaash, who was getting pretty stirred up, and the champion jockey took time out in the seconds before one of the big races of the season to talk to Luke Harvey. Brilliant.

Likewise with Bryony Frost, as her horse was re-shod moments before the big race at Newbury ten days ago. That to me was like Harry Kane speaking in the centre circle just before the kick-off in a big international. Thrilling for the viewer at home. I firmly believe,

that while the disconnect grows wider between footballers and football fans, racing's players can really come to the fore.

These are exciting times – yet I'd love to see racing modernise and engage. It's a wonderful sport – for the many – not the few.

It therefore gives me great pleasure to have replied on behalf of British Racing and in doing so, I would like you to raise your glasses to the future success and prosperity of British Racing.