



BHA CURRENT JOCKEY CPD AWARD FINALISTS 2020

1. **GAVIN ASHTON**
Age: 24
From: Manchester, England



Racing Riding Career: First licensed in 2017, currently Apprentice to Ian Williams and has had 15 wins from 228 rides. Winner of the 2019 Apprentice Hands and Heels Series.

CPD Highlights: Gavin has recently moved away from Newmarket to work as an Apprentice jockey for Ian Williams in Birmingham. Although this has been a massive change for him, he takes full advantage of the Jockey Coaching Programme and sees John Bramhill for simulator training once a week. He is in touch with John before and after all his rides and sends him videos of his own simulator work for feedback and to identify areas he can improve. He has been to Liverpool John Moores University which helped establish his optimum riding weight and is in regular touch with PJA Nutritionist Dan Martin regarding his diet and nutrition. Gavin is a fitness fanatic. Whilst living in Newmarket he used Peter O'Sullivan House for fitness classes and attended Ian Howell's 'Hour of Power' at The Racing Centre. He has taken this fitness education with him to his new yard and completes similar routines on his own.

Gavin has shown great dedication to his personal development and Dual Career aspirations. He has a Level 2 Personal Training qualification and, once settled into his new surroundings, found employment as a chef at his local pub. He recognises that having other things to do in his life has a noticeable positive affect on his mental resilience and the variety definitely helps him to handle any disappointments from the racecourse.

Gavin said: “I am delighted to have made the final three of the CPD award for the second year running. I have had quite a turbulent year, not only moving yards, moving entirely from Newmarket to Birmingham. I have changed agents and, due to the relocation, changed jockey coaches as well. I intend to continue to work as hard as ever and am already looking forward to next season”.

JETS Support/Training Courses: JETS Consultation, Training Advice, Career Guidance, Interview Training, Personal Development Plan. Media and Level 3 Racehorse Care and Management training.

2. GAIA BONI

Age: 22

From: Milan, Italy



Race Riding Career: Apprentice to William Jarvis since 2019 with 22 rides and 4 winners.

CPD Highlights: Gaia sees her Jockey Coach Michael Tebbutt 4 or 5 times a week working on riding and tactical skills and also referring to Michael before and after each race to analyse what happened and identify areas to improve. She has also taken advice from the PJA Nutritionist Oliver Whiteman attending cooking sessions and modifying her diet to improve her iron intake. As well as regularly attending the gym and exercise classes at Peter O’Sullivan House and local Leisure Centre she also works with a personal trainer who has helped her with her mental and physical resilience. She even took up boxing to help improve bone density after attending a session with George Wilson from Liverpool John Moores University.

Over the past two years, Gaia has shown huge commitment to setting and achieving goals laid out in her Personal Development Plan. She has worked on many different areas to improve fitness and technique, develop other areas of interest such as ballet and swimming and carry out training courses including two media training sessions. She has worked hard on her English and general communication skills and as well as doing English courses, she is also learning German and French and reviews the Racing Post to improve her knowledge of racing phrases. In order to prepare for the future and any possible university courses, she is also doing functional skills courses

in ITC and Maths and during lockdown, carried out some online courses through Racing2Learn and is in the process of completing her Level 3 Senior Groom qualification. She also carried out some volunteering at a Day Centre to help improve communication skills and connect with others. Finally, she has taken on a manager to help her promote herself and explore commercial opportunities.

Gaia said: “I am extremely dedicated to my career and am passionate about learning. I’m very grateful to everyone who has supported me so far in all the different areas and I hope to do everything possible to continue in my journey for as long as possible.”

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3. THOMAS WILLMOTT

Age: 20

From: Kinross



Race Riding Career: Conditional to Lucinda Russell since 2017. 276 rides, 23 winners

CPD Highlights: Thomas has made full use of his Jockey Coach Brian Harding over the last few years. He speaks to him before and after rides. Whenever they are both at the races he walks the racecourses with him and uses the simulator with Brian at least once a month. He has used the facilities at Liverpool John Moores University to ensure he looks after his weight in the correct manner and has regular conversations with PJA Nutritionist Dan Martin. Thomas has suffered with injury recently and was interested to learn how his diet and supplements can affect and indeed speed up his recovery. He very much sees himself as an athlete and approaches periods of injury as an opportunity to improve strength and fitness. He recently set the record for the 3-minute Watt Bike test during his rehabilitation at The Injured Jockeys Fund centre Jack Berry House. Thomas appreciates the positive impact working on his fitness has on his mental well being and this is boosted by conversations he has had with Sports Psychologist Michael Caulfield and with current PJA Performance Consultant Aodhagan Conlon.

Thomas has absolutely subscribed to the dual career concept. In his spare time, and during periods of injury he works for a local funeral director. He has completed the Foundation Funeral Practitioner module and has identified a further 9 modules he intends to complete in future.

Thomas said: “The support for jockeys is brilliant and is getting better all of the time. Jockeys are definitely acknowledging themselves more as athletes and the support available reinforces this. I enjoy helping other people and feel that the work I do as Funeral Director helps me to put things into perspective. If I have had a bad day or missed a winner, I am working with people who have lost loved ones, so I feel this work gives me better values as a person”.

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