

CAREER CASE STUDY: WORKING IN A TRAINING YARD

Many jockeys who retire from racing comment on how they can't imagine working in any other industry. They also want to find a career that means they can continue working closely with horses so a natural path that many jockeys take is to find a second career in a training yard. There is a number of different roles they can go into which may involve riding or not, going to the races or staying in the yard, more administration or practical aspects. Regardless of what direction they go in, former jockeys bring a huge amount of experience from their communication skills, horsemanship, industry knowledge, flexibility, time management, ability to work in team and commitment to hard work which makes them ideal employees for trainers.

STABLE STAFF CAREER OPTIONS:

- Assistant Trainer
- Travelling Head Groom
- Yard Manager
- Senior Head Groom
- Work Rider
- Racing Secretary

FORMER JOCKEYS NOW WORKING IN TRAINING YARDS

Aaron Bateman, Senior Head Groom, David O'Meara

Originally from the West Country, Aaron rode as a Jump jockey when he knew David O'Meara when they were both jockeys at Philip Hobbs'. After his riding career, JETS helped Aaron secure a role as an Instructor at the British Racing School where he gained a lot of experience managing students but he found himself keen to get back to working with horses full time.

Aaron joined David O'Meara in 2015 and now runs the yard alongside the other Head Groom Colin Bolger. As well as making sure the horses are fit and healthy, he has to manage a team of staff and ensure everyone is motivated and working well together.



Wayne Kavanagh, Travelling Head Groom, Richard Hannon



Wayne rode 73 winners as a Jump jockey before officially retiring in 2016. He used JETS to get his LGV licence whilst riding and towards the end of his career combined his riding with driving work to supplement his income when he was getting less rides.

He also used injury time out to do a plumbing course so he can now offer his plumbing services in the yard too. His role at Richard Hannon's means he is away from his family a lot but has enjoyed travelling horses all over the world including at the Breeders Cup, Hong Kong and across Europe.

Jemma Marshall, Work Rider, Owen Burrows

Jemma rode as a Flat jockey for 13 years and had 73 winners before retiring in 2013. She had decided she wasn't enjoying being a jockey as much as she should have been but was keen to carry on riding and being close to the horses. Whilst she misses the race riding, she has enjoyed watching



the horses progress from when they first arrive in the yard to when they retire as a broodmare or stallion. She moved from Charlie Appleby's yard in Newmarket to Owen Burrows in 2016. She also combines her yard work with her role as Chairman of the NARS Committee in Lambourn which she set up and now has 6 members representing both Flat and Jump yards.

Tom Messenger, Assistant Trainer, Dan Skelton



Tom retired as a Jump jockey in 2016 with a view to move straight into the role as Assistant Trainer to Dan Skelton. He always knew he wanted to stay involved hands on and that if he left racing it would be the people and the racing rather than the actual riding he would miss the most so this role allows him to still go racing and catch up with familiar faces from his riding days.

His key responsibilities involve liaising between the staff and Dan, going racing most days and communicating with owners and the trainer.

Calvin McCormack, Travelling Manager, Mark Johnston

Calvin rode mainly as a Jump jockey for around 15 years in both the UK and USA before retiring through injury in 2003. He initially worked away from the industry as a driving instructor but he



missed working with horses and eventually returned to racing to work for Mark Johnston where he has been for nearly 8 years. He now spends most of his time travelling with horses managing both the horses and the lads he works with. Calvin's main enjoyment comes from working with good horses every day (he also does a lot of the breaking in work) and saddling the winners and despite the long hours, he has enjoyed travelling to different countries with his job.

ON WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY

Aaron Bateman: "It's hugely rewarding to play an integral part in getting horses to improve and perform and ultimately winning at the races."

Wayne Kavanagh: "I don't see the harm to use periods when you're not riding, to do other jobs. The driving not only prepared me for this role, however also meant that I probably rode for two years longer than I would have done if I was just riding."

Jemma Marshall: "I have used JETS to do other courses. I would advise others to look at other interests because even though you might not always have time, it has helped motivate me and prove that I can do other things if I want to."

Tom Messenger: "The relentless nature of being on the road nearly every day is hard, especially as it impacts on family time but the highlight for me has been this season having had over 200 winners and our first Grade 1 was a massive achievement for us."

Calvin McCormack: "The man management aspect of my role is a skill I have had to acquire, I think the main thing is that you have to be easy to get on with and organised."

HOW TO GET STARTED?

If you're interested in gaining skills which could be useful for second careers working in training yards, please contact Lisa Delany. Some popular course suggestions are outlined below along with some useful contacts.

USEFUL TRAINING COURSES:

LGV/HGV Driving Courses
Diploma in Racehorse Care & Management
BHA Racing Secretaries Course
Assistant Trainers Course
BHA Trainers Modules
Yard Managers Course

USEFUL CONTACTS:

CareersinRacing - <http://www.careersinracing.com/>
JETS Job Board - <http://www.jets-uk.org/jobs/>
Racing Groom website - <https://racinggroom.com/>
NTF Website – Working for a Trainer
<https://www.racehorsetrainers.org/industry/working.asp>
JETS – Lisa Delany (lsa@jets-uk.org) or Phil Kinsella (phil@jets-uk.org)