

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

David Carr tracks down ex-jockey and trainer **Aaron Bateman**

Passing on experience to fresh talent

WHEN you're trying to make your way in the world you want a teacher who knows how to make the most of what you've got, how to overcome the inevitable pitfalls and grind it out.

No wonder the toughly pragmatic footballer Jack Charlton proved rather more successful in management than his supremely gifted brother Bobby.

Which suggests that former jockey Aaron Bateman is the ideal man for his new role as an instructor for the British Racing School in Newmarket – few are better placed to teach a teenager how to make a living in racing, in or out of the saddle.

"It is an extremely hard industry to get into," he says. "We tell them that being a jockey is not the be-all and end-all, there are plenty of other opportunities.

"Hopefully I've got a bit of empathy with them, I know how hard it is. I've been very lucky but I've had to work very hard along the way."

A way which started in Somerset, catching the bug as he went racing



Name Aaron Bateman **Age** 34

When at large 1998-2003

Best moment "My first winners on Saxon Duke in the Warwick National. It rained all day and somebody said to me he would hate the ground and we had no chance. Only four finished and I won by more than 20 lengths. But I was an amateur so I never got the percentage money!"

with his father, learning the ropes at a riding school before a couple of years in the point-to-point yard of Tim Long – now clerk of the course at Ffos Las.

Then came half a dozen years with Philip Hobbs, first as an amateur then a conditional jockey.

"He was excellent to work for," Bateman recalls. "He was a gentleman and was very good to me. I learned a

lot from him and it was a fantastic time, the time of my life.

"The best ride I had was Rooster Booster in the Tote Gold Trophy – I got it beat off a good handicap mark but to ride a horse like that was memorable."

Bateman gave up riding to fulfil an ambition to train and had success with point-to-pointers and then under a full licence but admits: "Financially it was very difficult and the sensible thing was to stop."

Which led to two and a half enjoyable years working as head lad to Evan Williams before circumstances intervened again.

"My wife was expecting twins," Bateman remembers. "It was very tough working long hours at Evan's and financially we needed to look to the future.

"I was out of the game for a few months, then with the help of Lisa Delany at Jets [Jockeys Employment & Training Scheme] looked at opportunities for the future.

"We sent a lot of cvs out, I contacted the Racing School, I got the job and I've been here a year."

Helping to forge the next generation of Aaron Batemans. The original says: "They come in with limited racing experience and we get them into riding the right way and hopefully get them into a racing yard.

"I'm loving it. I never thought I would be into teaching but I got all my experience along the way from people teaching me so it is good to pass some of that knowledge on."

I GOTTA HORSE

Simon Brewster speaks to Lewis Porteous about his pride and joy **Jungle Bay**

Bargain buy giving plenty of pleasure

Horse Jungle Bay **Wins** 3

Owner Simon Brewster **Age** 59

Best moment "Watching Jungle Bay carry my colours at Deauville was a memorable day"

THERE aren't many people who can claim to own a horse who cost 400,000gns. Such an accolade is usually saved for millionaire businessmen and royalty, that is unless your name is Simon Brewster.

The best thing about it for the proud owner of Jungle Bay is that the former Andre Fabre-trained son of Oasis Dream cost him barely one per cent of his price tag as a yearling.

Bred to be a champion sprinter, Jungle Bay never reached those dizzy heights with Fabre, but under the shrewd handling of current trainer Jane Chapple-Hyam the five-year-old has managed three wins, providing Brewster with his first as an owner.

"I didn't really think about owning horses to begin with and it wasn't until I met Jane a bit later in life that I seriously considered it," says the 59-year-old quantity surveyor before elaborating on his chance encounter with the Newmarket trainer.

"My wife Eira also enjoys racing and we like to visit racecourses in France.



Owner Simon Brewster with his three-time winner Jungle Bay

We were over at Deauville the day Jane had Klammer running and I got talking to her. That evening we went to our usual restaurant in Deauville but we didn't get treated very well.

"At the end of the night the owner apologised and told us to come back the following evening and said he'd make sure we'd get looked after. So on the Sunday night we went back and Jane was in there with her head lad and we started talking about racing.

"I remember them having a bottle of wine each and I thought 'I like this'. They couldn't believe I didn't own a racehorse as I knew so much about racing – apparently that's when my wife's face dropped as she knew that would be it."

A bit of arm twisting from Chapple-Hyam led to the purchase of Frosty Secret, who would become the first runner to carry Brewster's red and white silks, but it was Jungle Bay who really cemented the partnership.

"Jane phoned me one day and said I

had to buy this horse called Jungle Bay," recalls Brewster. "The previous owners had gone bankrupt and she thought there was plenty still to come. It turned out that the previous owners had never actually bought the horse from Tattersalls and I was able to buy him direct from them for £4,500."

The first of Jungle Bay's victories came over 7f at Chester in July 2011 when both Brewster and Chapple-Hyam had other commitments at Newmarket. He says: "We met up with Jane and she said he's got to have a chance today. He won and it was just fantastic." Further wins at Wolverhampton and Lingfield have followed and, despite Brewster having never witnessed the horse winning in the flesh, he can't believe the luck Jungle Bay has brought him.

"I've been very lucky. Some people own horses for years and never have a winner and here I am with a horse who always tries and has given us immense pleasure."



James Best: skills advertised on dual Plumpton winner Dushy Valley

SCOUTING REPORT

Andrew King is impressed by the attitude of Philip Hobbs conditional **James Best**, who won't rest on his laurels

IF KEEPING your feet firmly on the ground is a template for success then conditional rider James Best is going to make the grade as a jump jockey as the down-to-earth 22-year-old has already laid good foundations for the future.

It is not only Philip Hobbs who has spotted Best's finesse combined with strength in the saddle as other trainers such as Alan Jones, Jackie Du Plessis and Paul Henderson are also on the case.

Anyone who witnessed Best pushing and cajoling Henderson's Dushy Valley to victory in a couple of 3m2f handicap chases at Plumpton will not be doubting the rider's persistence when push comes to shove.

From the outset on both occasions Dushy Valley needed to be firmly driven and something that appeared particularly hard work from the stands was made to look all part of a day's work out on the course.

Best recalls: "He's not the easiest horse in the world as you have to keep at him but fair play – the more you ask the more he keeps picking up. But I must admit it probably looked much harder than it actually was."

Although he's lying fourth in the conditional jockeys' table with 14 winners on the board, going for the title is not a priority for Best, who has ridden a career total of 37 successes.

He says: "It's nice to be sitting there

Strength and determination in abundance

Name James Best **Age** 22

Best moment Riding Lamb Or Cod to victory in the Totepool Silver Trophy Handicap Hurdle and leading home a 1-2-3 for my boss Philip Hobbs as he beat stablemates Arthurian Legend and Tony Star

Best horse ridden I think it would have to be Turko in a hunter chase at Newbury as he was a very decent horse in his prime and gave me a really good feel that day

in the table but it is not in the forefront of what I want to achieve right now as I consider it more important to keep improving and progressing as you never stop learning in this game.

"I have no intention of resting on my laurels as such and I'm very wise to the fact that when I lose my claim it will be a whole new ball game as I will have to mix it with the big boys on level terms."

Q&A 'Richard Johnson has been a tremendous help to me'

How did you get into the sport? I grew up in Cornwall doing a lot of eventing and hunting and always wanted to try my hand at racing. I started riding out for Jackie Du Plessis when I was 13 and it has grown from there.

What are your ambitions for the jumps season? Obviously to stay in one piece and keep riding as many winners as possible. Getting back home from the races injury free is always a result.

What do you need to work on? Everything. You cannot take anything for granted in this game and you just have to keep your head down and keep improving.

What are your strengths? I like to try to ride as positively as possible and I'm not worried about giving a horse a squeeze going into a fence.

Which of your colleagues do you admire the most? Richard Johnson has been a tremendous help to me and all us young riders look up to the likes of AP McCoy and Ruby Walsh.