

January 2005

Friends,
It has again been a busy and exciting few months:

Saucy Night: *from oblivion into history*

We believe Saucy Night made racing history on Monday 3rd of January at Folkestone, becoming the first professionally trained barefoot horse to win a race under rules.



We are enormously proud of Saucy, who came to us being sold out of racing. He had once been unkindly referred to as the worst horse in training, due to his uninspiring record: 7 races, never having run past another horse, on average losing by 50+ lengths per race. He is the first horse to come through our barefoot program, and, since then, has never been out of the money in 4 races. His latest success was completed with foot perfect jumping and the attitude of a horse completely happy with himself - in stark contrast to when he arrived:



Why barefoot?

We are committed to barefoot because we have already seen enough to convince us that unshod horses have a huge advantage in injury prevention. Metal shoes increase the impact on the legs and throughout the body considerably (some studies suggest by 70%) and by being barefoot the chances of tendons, sore shins, and other impact injuries, are greatly reduced. For horses like Saucy, who had sore feet to begin with, the path of remedial shoeing is often an expensive and

rather unsuccessful business.

The holy grail for us, as yet unproven, is barefoot allowing us to race on all goings, in particular on good to firm or firmer. We've researched the last two years of results from a number of racecourses, comparing the Racing Post ratings (RPRs) of winning horses on different types of going. We expected lower rated horses to do better on good to firm or firmer, but were very surprised by how much better. This table shows the average rating of winning horses at two tracks:

	Good to Soft or softer	Good to Firm or firmer
Worcester	131	100
Bath	78	69

In the same 2 year period at Bath only 1 maiden on good ground was won by a horse rated 70 or less, compared with 10 on firm ground, while at Exeter a horse rated 110 would be 8 times more likely to win on good to firm or firmer ground. (Each RPR is normally equivalent to a one length advantage).

Saucy Night will race on through the summer all being well, and we have several others being prepared for both summer jumping and flat racing on firm going. And we don't only expect an advantage on firm ground, we have noticed in training that barefoot horses also seem to be doing better than shod horses on soft ground. We have our first two year olds coming in to go barefoot and we are excited about starting the regime with horses that have never been shod.

The Seawalker: *a world first*



Our 'Seawalker' has been developed to give horses in training the benefits of a healing walk in the sea after their day's work. Designed to reduce injuries and promote good health, the Seawalker brings together proven healing technologies with the advantages of controlled movement. The Seawalker has taken us over two years to develop, involving travel to Australia, Germany, Holland and Ireland to speak to leading experts in the fields of equine hydrotherapy spas, horsewalkers, and equine medicine. The Seawalker has the following features:

- Variable depth of water for different exercises
- Water chilled down to 3-4c
- Natural unprocessed sea salts added to a 5% solution giving maximum healing benefits
- Water also contains a natural antiseptic agent effective against more than 800 bacterial and viral strains, 100 strains of fungus, and a large number of single and multi celled parasites
- At over 50ft diameter in size the walker allows horses to walk in a wide circle

- Open Belebros fencing relaxes horses encouraging them to work with good body shape
- 10 separate speed settings allowing great flexibility of exercise from warm down to fast trot.

Scientific studies show that immersing horses legs in salt water at low temperatures is effective in both healing and preventing injury. The Seawalker offers those benefits and also allows horses to slowly unwind after fast work, have a good work out without a rider, or build up to full training with maximum protection against injury.

The Seawalker has been working successfully for the last few weeks and we are already seeing some encouraging improvements; very cold legs, reduction in mud fever and other minor infections, and exceptional hoof growth. Those horses coming off the Seawalker without any other work are proving to be incredibly fit. We are looking forward to getting a few youngsters on the Seawalker soon as we feel it will be very good for careful building up of developing horses. Overall we are convinced it will play a big part in keeping all our horses healthy and strong.

Our own gallops at last

Maybe not a world first, or history making as such, but we couldn't be happier with the new gallops that have been recently completed. It is often said about training establishments that the gallops are the single most important part, and we now have a gallop which is as good as any Simon has ridden. It makes the 14 months spent searching for this location worthwhile, and you'll be seeing super fit horses racing from here - the gallops rise 250 feet in 4.8 furlongs! The years at East Kennet taught us about keeping horses sound, training from other people's gallops, and making the best of limited facilities. But now everything is coming into place to enable us to move to another level.

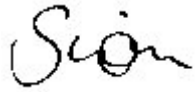


Not wanting to ask his horses to do anything he could not do himself, on Saturday Simon ran barefoot up the whole gallop, in the process raising £750 towards the Tsunami relief appeal from generous sponsors. Sadly there is no photographic reminder of this somewhat foolhardy and very challenging feat, but we do have half a dozen witnesses, a couple of whom tried to keep up with him and dropped out along the way! A big thank you to those who contributed.

Looking forward, work will begin on the new outdoor and loose school this month, and our new offices and staff accommodation are nearing completion. In racing, we have some new horses coming in, and a number of runners coming up which will be worth following so look out for us.

Happy New Year to you all and please forward this to any friends and family who might be

interested in what we are doing.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon". The letters are cursive and fluid, with the 'S' being particularly large and prominent.

Simon Earle & Eamonn Wilmott

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