

ANOTHER SUNDAY WORLD EXCLUSIVE

WE'RE GUNNER WIN THE NATIONAL

LUCKY HORSE: Geraldine with Ted Walsh and National hopeful Seabass



PAST THE POST: Katie Walsh winning on Seabass

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Irish syndicate hope Seabass can be Aintree hero

THEY are Ireland's real racy men – and they're off to live out a dream next Saturday at the Aintree Grand National.

The six drinking buddies from the village of Dunmore, Co Galway, never dreamed that the little foal, Seabass, that they bought back in 2006 would one day be taking part in the world's greatest horse race.

But when Pat Glynn saw the ad in the Irish Field, he just had to buy him from breeder Joe Costigan.

The horse's destiny was sealed when top jockey Ruby Walsh advised Pat to "throw it to my aul' fella" – legendary trainer Ted.

It will be either Ruby or his sister Katie who will pilot the horse at Aintree.

"The Walshes always had faith in the horse, and they've always been great to us," syndicate member Donal Collins said.

Indeed, not so long ago, the horse was all set to go to the knackers' yard as he kept getting leg injuries – but Ted urged them to give him a chance.

"Three of us wanted to keep the



JOY: Ted, Katie and Seabass

By GERALDINE COMISKEY

horse, the other three wanted to walk away from him, but when Ted said 'Let's give him a chance', everyone pulled in behind him.

Things are looking good for the National.

"He's 14-1 now. And the favourite has just pulled out. So a lot of things are lining up for us. I'd put €30 each way on him.

Temper

"He has has a bit of a temper, and he has thrown a few of the stable lads, but Ted said if you can control the temper and direct it towards the track, it will actually help him," Donal said.

The members of the syndicate all come from the Dunmore-Castlerea area on the Roscommon-Galway border.

Donal and his brother Niall design agricultural equipment for McHale Engineering in Kilmaine. Robbie Byrne works in his family pub and undertaker's in Dunmore. John Harte is a butcher in Castlerea. Pat Gleeson is the Managing Director of Weir's Waste and Pat Glynn is a builder and farmer in Dunmore. The syndicate is known as The Gunners and they're not all Arsenal supporters either – Robbie is a Chelsea fan.

Like all successful sportsmen, they have their WAGs.

"The women have been going mad buying dresses and hats," Donal said.

Seabass was a perfect gent when the Sunday World called to his stables in Kill to wish him good luck.

The gelding is known for his hot-head, but he seems to be a bit of a ladies' man. "He's no temper at all," Katie Walsh insisted. "He can be a bit spooky but he gives me

BIG CHANCE: Marta with Seabass

no trouble."

And his Polish groom Marta Pisarek described him as "my big baby". Marta, who exercises him every day, will be travelling on the boat with him from Dublin Port to Liverpool.

Ted will drive the horsebox. Katie, Ruby and their sister Jennifer (who doesn't ride) will fly over with Ted's wife Helen.

Arson

The young jockey who broke him in, Jamie Kyrne, was destined for glory but died at the age of 18 in an arson attack in flats where he was staying with other jockeys in Yorkshire.

Ted regrets that Jamie isn't around to see Seabass run in the Grand National – he might even have got the ride himself.

He says it's a shame that only the rich can buy racehorses now. "There isn't the money. Syndicates

have died out. These lads are in a better position because there are six of them to spread the pain and the horse is doing very well. He's won €130,000 so far."

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