

(Mrs. Pollard 102)



LOVE/HATE FINALE SPECIALS



Like the rest of the country I'll be glued to tonight's Love/Hate series finale and we couldn't help but whip up a number of specials ahead of the curtain call.

Fans of the show with a bloodlust aren't likely to be disappointed with us offering odds of 10/11 for 2 or more individuals to be killed on screen.

As for awards, we're tipping the show to clean up at the IFTAs with skinny odds of 7/4 available on Nidge and the gang picking up an unprecedented 10 or more gongs at the awards, while it's 4/1 for any of the talented cast to reach the pinnacle of their craft and win an Oscar.

Elsewhere, Paddy Power are make it 5/6 for Fran to say Coola-Boola more than 3 times during the, 8/15 for Series 6 to be the last and 6/5 for the show to be responsible for three or four of the top ten twitter trends in Ireland.

It's not like you need to add more drama to the series but if you do, there's plenty for you to have a punt on.

CHRISTMAS ALREADY ON THE CARDS! - LESS THAN 50 DAYS TO GO!

We're just past Halloween but already the bookies are counting the days to Christmas. With less than fifty days left until Christmas Day, Paddy Power have come up with some cracking Christmas specials to get everyone in the festive mood!



Following last year's snowless Christmas, the odds of the people of Dublin and Cork waking up to a winter wonderland on Christmas Day are at 4/1 and 5/1.

Punters can also have a bet on who will top the Christmas charts, with the unknown X Factor winner heavily tipped at 1/3 while Brian O'Driscoll is 8/13 to have his book top the festive charts.

And if that isn't enough to tickle your fancy Paddy Power are also offering betting which toy will be top of most children's lists in the run up to the big day with My Friend Cayla the favourite at 4/1 followed by Doh Vinci 3D Deluxe Styler and Disney Princess Snow Glow Elsa which are both at 5/1.

It's hard to believe there are just 50 days left until Christmas Day. Just like shopping our punters like to get in early and get the best prices!

PADDYPOWER.

EXCLUSIVE KINDHEARTED FORMER

SCHOOL OF

Promising jockeys are trained for free by Tony

By GERALDINE COMISKEY

MEET the kids who are riding out the recession - on the turf.

These teens are proving that you don't have to be a millionaire to enjoy the 'sport of kings'.

And, while they're too young to place a bet, they have the bookies in a flutter every weekend as they show off their skills in the saddle.

"Give them two years and they'll be ready to take on the biggest names in horseracing," says former steeplechase champ, Tony Beegan, who trains promising jockeys for free at his yard near Ballinasloe, Co Galway.

The past pupils' roll call at Tony's Heather View Racing academy is like a who's who of the racing industry in Ireland, the UK and as far afield as Australia.

Among those who have been trained personally by Tony are Barry Geraghty (the ace jockey started off on Tony's pony, The Weed), Peter Carberry, Davy Russell, Martin Harley, Robbie Downey, Oisín Murphy, Sean Corby, Shane Foley (who now rides for Ger Lyons), Brendan McDonagh (now in Australia), Michael Darcy, Cork trainer Adrian Maguire, Muredach Kelly and leading lady jockeys Emma Sweeney and Sophie Ralston.

Sophie's skills in the saddle were put to the test during the Queen's visit to the National Stud in 2011 - when she was demonstrating a simulator, Prince Philip insisted on turning up the speed.

Chance

Meanwhile, Muredach Kelly is now one of Ireland's top racehorse trainers.

What they all have in common is that they needed a leg up at the start of their career.

"I don't charge them - and I never in my life took money from them."



EXPERT: Tony Beegan training a horse in the pool with young Gavin Ryan

PRODUCTION LINE OF WINNERS: Tony Beegan at his yard near Ballinasloe picked all winners so far.

While it's not as well known as the RACE academy in Kildare, Tony says his jockey school is neck and neck with the more famous jockey school in terms of racing success.

"Some of my kids go on to the RACE academy in Kildare but some don't need to - they are good enough. The RACE is full-time - they have normal school lessons

them to leave on Sunday. Education is very important as a stand-by - but if they really want to be jockeys, it's hard to get them to think about anything else."

Tony has just four jockeys in training at any given time, all aged 14 to 15 years. Tara McCrissican, Andrew Kennedy, Gavin Ryan and Kealin Quinn have been training with Tony all summer, and are already riding like veterans, he says.

Promising

"They're all very promising. Kealin is one to watch - in about two years' time he'll be on the circuit. He's so fired up, you can't get him off the horse. He was supposed to go home after the mid-term break but he wanted to stay the whole Halloween weekend.

"He'd rather practice his horsemanship than go to a Halloween party - when you see that kind of dedication, you just have to encourage it. It would be a sin not to help that young fella."

But, while Tony's students are racing to go, he sometimes reins them in.

"You get a lad who's just won a race and he's all cocky, so we put him up on a big horse that would pull, and after a few minutes he cops on that the horse is running

away with him and he's not really in control at all. Then he asks for help with his technique."

But while they might occasionally have to eat humble pie, jockeys can't pig out, says Tony.

"Some of them struggle to keep the weight down. They'd range from six to eight stone, which is perfect for their age and size.

"If they're putting on the weight we put them in what they call 'bootcamp' - dry toast and black tea."

Tony, who has been coaching young jockeys since the late 70s, was himself a jockey "but I got into bad health and had to give it up".

The 60-year-old dad of five and granddad of three has also passed on his passion for racing to his own family. Three-year-old grandson Aidan Og rides a Shetland pony around the paddock. "He is going mad to gallop," Tony reveals.

Granddaughters Erin (9) and Sarah (7) are also pony-mad, as are their parents. Tony's daughter Clodagh Beegan (25) is also a horse-trainer.

"The only one in the family who is not horsey is my wife, Anne. She'll help us pulling the boots off when we're coming into the kitchen but that's as far as her interest goes - she looks after the house end of things and I look after the yard."

While Tony is content to train the future generation of jockey for free, it costs money to travel to events with four jockeys and up to 12 animals.

"We have an old '92-reg truck but she's clapped out," Tony says. "We're on the go all the time, travelling all over the country and even to the UK. We're hoping someone will sponsor us so we can get a new horsebox."

"Maybe the CAB [Criminal Assets Bureau] will give us some of the money or assets they seized - like the stuff they took from John Gilligan's stables. I believe that if more kids got a chance to follow their dream, they wouldn't get involved in crime."

geraldine.comiskey@sundayworld.com



TRAINED BY TONY: Barry Geraghty