

STABLE STAFF RISE TO STARLIGHT CHARITY CHALLENGE

Stable staff will be saddling up to support the Starlight Children's Foundation at Newbury Racecourse tomorrow, Friday 13 May, by taking part in a unique charity event.

The Inter Stable Starlight Charity Race will follow an eight-race card under rules featuring the £30,000 Starlight Handicap, with the majority of the riders being full time stable-staff who do not currently hold a jockeys licence and who have each raised a minimum of £2,000 to take part.

The race is the initiative of Lambourn trainer and Starlight Charity Raceday Chairman Nicky Henderson, Nicky's daughter Sarah and Sophie Portman wife of trainer, Jonathan Portman, who has first-hand experience of the charity which supports seriously and terminally ill children and their families.

She said, "The Starlight Children's Foundation is a charity very close to my heart as our daughter, Eliza, benefited from their amazing work during a frightening and life threatening spell in hospital four years ago. Today's race has already helped to raise the profile of Starlight and I know that the money raised by the riders will be put to very good use."

In addition to Jonathan Portman, whose Classic Mission will be ridden in the race by groom Ellie Trousdale, Lambourn yards represented include Nicky Henderson, trainer-rider Natalie Lloyd Beavis, Jamie Osborne, Brendan Powell and Harry Whittington who will also ride his own horse in the race, together with Gloucestershire-based Ben Pauling who spent six years as assistant to Henderson.

George McGrath, Chief Executive of the National Association of Stable Staff said, "I am delighted to see that some of our members have been given the opportunity through their yards to support this important charity.

"Stable staff are at the heart of the racing community and are often among the first to go beyond the call of duty for a good cause. I commend those who have taken up the challenge and are putting their riding skills to the test on the racecourse, and to those friends and colleagues who have supported their fundraising efforts."

Sarah Henderson said, "Dad has been a big supporter of Starlight for many years and we are grateful to Newbury Racecourse for providing us with the opportunity to stage this unique race.

“Having ridden in charity races myself I know how exciting it can be. The idea behind the conditions of the race was to provide people working in yards who may wish to take out a licence in the future with a taste of the thrill of race riding.”

NAOSS members taking part are: Fiona Dowling (Jamie Osborne), Jack Findlater (Nicky Henderson), Rachel Powell (Brendan Powell), Arron Rid (Nicky Henderson), Ellie Trousdale (Jonathan Portman), Hannah Worgan (Ben Pauling)

ENDS.

Further information:

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