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Stephen Heath Owner Breeder Blog No. 3

As a part of the next generation thoroughbred enthusiasts, the challenge for my fellow trainees and I is very much to highlight the aspects of our sport that make it a rewarding choice for hobbyists and career-minded people alike. There is no question that our own passion for horse racing is alive and well, but the sport undoubtedly has issues in raising this passion in a large enough number of people which will not only ensure that it continues into the distant future, but that it thrives while doing so. This issue formed the focus of the annual Darley Flying Start conference at the Keadeen Hotel on the final evening of the Irish phase of the program. We were asked to come up with 'Blue Sky' ideas and suggestions for the Darley Irish Oaks of 2012 that might help to attract the crowds that such a relentlessly high-quality race deserves. Ideas were wide-ranging, and it was a great experience to be a part of an event where a vision of a successful future for horse racing was so central to the wishes of everybody involved. As young people who love horse racing, we each have an obligation to play our part in its future success, and that can be as simple as making sure that we take as many of our non-racing friends to the races as possible – I am yet to hear of someone who failed to enjoy themselves on their first visit, win or lose!

While on the Darley Flying Start program, we have also had the pleasure of viewing all of the premier stallions and stud farms in Ireland and the UK. To me, viewing stock of this elite standard highlighted two aspects of the industry that make it a great one to work in. As a fan you get to meet your heroes, whether that is the mares you work with, or the stallions you get to see along the way. I myself was lucky enough to meet such luminaries and past turf greats such as Oasis Dream, Pivotal, Manduro, Spinning Queen, and Mail The Desert all in the line of duty. Horses such as Tranquility Lake, A. P. Indy, Life is Sweet and Zenyatta also crossed my path while working as a stud hand in the USA. This exemplifies the other great benefit of a career in the horse racing industry – the ability to travel is almost unparalleled! Travelling the world, whilst working with several of the best equine athletes to ever grace it is truly a pleasure, and it is only the established athletes I have mentioned. I have found working with foals and yearlings limitlessly rewarding, with any number impressing in your mind that they will be the next Frankel. So far, like Frankel's contemporaries, athletic ability in that reckless abundance eludes my past charges, but it is the dream of something so great that drives us all forward!