



TOP JOCKEYS ARE HAILED AT THE STOBART LESTERS 2016

- ***FLAT AND JUMPS CHAMPIONS ARE JOCKEYS OF THE YEAR***
- ***TWO LESTERS FOR CHAMPION APPRENTICE JOSEPHINE GORDON***
- ***DOUBLE POSTHUMOUS HONOUR FOR THE LATE TOM O'RYAN***

The leading jockeys in Britain, on the Flat and over Jumps, were honoured tonight at the 26th Stobart Lesters awards.

An audience of 400 sports men and women and guests witnessed nine Lesters being presented at the glitzy awards, held for the first time at the Ricoh Arena in the Midlands.

Richard Johnson and **Jim Crowley** this year won their first Stobart-sponsored jockeys championships, over Jumps and on the Flat respectively. They were voted for by their colleagues as Stobart Jump Jockey of the Year and Stobart Flat Jockey of the Year.

That takes them to three Lesters and two Lesters during their careers, but all of the other winners this evening were receiving their first Lesters.

Stobart Champion Apprentice Jockey **Josephine Gordon** was called to the platform twice as she was voted both Great British Racing Lady Jockey of the Year and JETS Apprentice Jockey of the Year.

Craig Nichol received the Lester as Racing Excellence Conditional Jockey of the Year, fresh from his crowning as Stobart Champion Conditional Jockey at Sandown earlier this year.

AtTheRaces viewers chose conditional jockey **Colm McCormack's** remarkable effort aboard Fiddler's Flight at Sedgefield for AtTheRaces Jump Ride of the Year, while Racing Post readers voted for the Racing Post-sponsored Flat Ride of the Year. That went to **Robert Winston** for his superb ride on Librisa Breeze at Ascot.

The late **Tom O'Ryan** was chosen by both Flat and Jump Jockeys for their respective Special Recognition awards, sponsored by All Sport Insurance and the Arena Racing Company.

The Stobart Champion Apprentice trophy this year had already been named in honour of Tom who tragically died during the summer after a short battle with cancer. He was just 61 years old.

Tom's knowledge, dedication and motivational skills helped many young jockeys during their careers. As a natural horseman, he was able to coach them expertly. 'The Voice of the North' brought his enthusiasm and experience to a wide range of disciplines, including as a journalist and broadcaster.

Andrew Tinkler, Stobart Group's Chief Executive Officer, said: "The Lesters are a superb occasion for the celebration of the great achievements of our Jockeys, both on the Flat and over Jumps. The contribution of Jockeys to the sport of horse racing is hugely valued and we at Stobart are delighted to play a part in honouring these fine sporting stars."

Paul Struthers, Chief Executive of the Professional Jockeys Association, said: "

"The Stobart Lesters are always a special occasion and they have come a long way since they were launched in 1990, and this year's ceremony didn't disappoint. It was a truly superb ceremony recognising the dedication, bravery and skill of jockeys rounded off for the second year running by a fabulous performance from Ronan Keating.

"All of those Jockeys who won this evening will be thrilled and will cherish their awards. On behalf of the PJA and its members we'd like to congratulate Josephine - who won two Lesters - Robert, Craig, Colm, Jim and Richard.

"Jockeys lost one of their greatest friends and supporters, Tom O'Ryan, this year. His contribution was immense and he is much missed. The fact that he was not only nominated by both codes - Flat and Jump Jockeys - for their Special Recognition Lester, but won both as well, speaks volumes of the esteem in which Tom was held.

"It has been the end of a difficult year, with bad news never far away. The loss of Tom, JT McNamara, Mark Birch and Walter Swinburn has hit the weighing room hard, as did the injuries suffered by Freddy Tylicki, who was in everyone's thoughts tonight as he starts his rehabilitation.

"It is even more important at times like these that on behalf of the PJA's members, we recognise and show our gratitude to Stobart Group, not just for supporting the Lesters but for sponsoring jockeys collectively which helps provide them with Career Ending Insurance and also for sponsoring the Championships. It is very much appreciated.

"I would also like to say a huge thank you to all of the evening's sponsors, as the event would not be what it is without their support."

Winners at the Stobart Lesters 2016



Lady Jockey of the Year:

Josephine Gordon



Apprentice Jockey of the Year:

Josephine Gordon



Flat Ride of the Year:

Robert Winston on Librisa Breeze at Ascot on 1st October



Flat Jockey Special Recognition:

Tom O'Ryan



Conditional Jockey of the Year:

Craig Nichol

AT THE RACES Jump Ride of the Year:

Colm McCormack on Fiddler's Flight at Sedgefield on 9th February



Jump Jockey Special Recognition:

Tom O'Ryan

Stobart Stobart Flat Jockey of the Year:

Jim Crowley

Stobart Jump Jockey of the Year:

Richard Johnson

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