



The Boss: The Life and Times of Horseracing Legend Gordon W. Richards (Mainstream sport)

John Budden

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The sudden death of Gordon W. Richards in late September 1998 brought a premature end to a legendary training career which had seen him rise from obscurity to national fame as master of his profession.

Consigned to racing's scrap-heap with a broken back at the age of 29, he scraped a living as a livery stable proprietor and horse-dealer in a remote part of Northumberland until, five years later, he `discovered' Playlord and a new dawn broke.

Rugged, demanding, often outspoken, sometimes ruthless but never lacking in humour, Gordon made relentless progress through the training ranks. `The Boss', as he was widely known, liked to run his stable his own way. Horses, not humans, headed the pecking order, as many famous riders and owners discovered to their cost. Few escaped unscathed, but in over 30 years he employed only six stable jockeys, and two of these, Ron Barry and Jonjo O'Neill, gained championship honours.

The Boss charts the successes of the man who twice saddled more than a hundred winners in a single season and who scooped the pool in the Aintree Grand National on two occasions. This enthralling biography, written with full co-operation of Richards himself, provides a compelling insight into the forces that drove him to become one of the most respected trainers in the world.

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