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## Devon racehorse trainer to stage charity open day

RACING fans can enjoy a taste of what goes on behind the scenes when a Devon trainer stages an open day at his yard this weekend.

Rod Millman, who trains at The Paddocks, in Kentisbeare, near Cullompton, is opening his gates to the public on Sunday [March 27].

"It will be a great opportunity for anyone with an interest in racing to see some thoroughbreds up close and, at the same time, discover just what's involved in getting them to the track," said Rod, who has been responsible for nearly 500 winners and amassed in excess of £4 million in prize money since he began training in 1989.

"Whether you're a prospective owner, an occasional racegoer or simply a horse lover, we look forward to providing you with a real insight into what we're all about," added the former jump jockey, who once rode for record-breaking National Hunt trainer Martin Pipe.

"We pride ourselves on treating horses as individuals. With the peace and tranquillity of the Mid Devon countryside, outstanding facilities and a family orientated team, we believe we've got a wonderful set-up and we're keen people should have the opportunity to see it for themselves."

Rod is almost certainly best known for his exploits with Sergeant Cecil, whose 10 victories saw him capture the hearts of the racing public and earn the accolade of Racehorse of the Year in 2005.

The stable's talisman has long since retired but among the 40-plus horses on show to visitors to The Paddocks at the weekend will be the talented hurdler Numide and the much-improved Irish Juggler on who the trainer's 24-year-old son James - who not only assists with the training of the horses but also rides most of them in their races - recently landed his 100th career victory.

The four-year-old, who was winning his second race in little more than a fortnight, is one of four horses who will carry the colours of the Rod Millman Racing Club this season.

"Racing is sometimes referred to as the Sport of Kings," said James, "but we wanted to make it more accessible to everyone which is one of the reasons for staging the open day and also why we've launched the racing club which, for little more than the cost of a pint of beer a week, allows you to experience all the thrills and excitement of owning a racehorse."

Anyone interested in seeing the club's horses or finding out more about how to join will have the opportunity to do so at the open day.

Gates will open from 9.30am to 12.30pm and admission is just £5, which includes entry to a prize draw, the proceeds of which will be split between the Devon Air Ambulance and the Injured Jockeys Fund. Refreshments will be available throughout the course of the event.

- For more details visit [www.rodmillmanracing.co.uk](http://www.rodmillmanracing.co.uk) or call 01884 266620.

- Ends -

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