

Mullingar Performance Horse and Pony Sale \ Margie McLoone

Rathcoona Paddy sold to USA for €8,200

Two lots were sold for €8,200 and over 80% of those forward changed hands in Mullingar. Margie McLoone reports

THE further relaxation of Covid-19 protocols saw many potential purchasers make a physical return to the sales ring in Mullingar last Saturday but, on a day of strong trade, they had to work hard to repel those bidding online.

Some 98 lots (over 80% of those forward) changed hands with the average of €4,400 being 3% up on the March sale at the Co Westmeath venue. In a first for Mullingar Horse Sales, two lots were sold online to the United States headed by Rathcoona Paddy (Lot 139) who was purchased for the joint-top price of €8,200 by New Hampshire's Kati McCormack Amarantes.

The four-year-old home-bred Irish Draught gelding by Ceide Prince was consigned to the sale by Co Galway's Padraig Quirke who had the grey well turned-out and finely tuned for both the video-day and the sales day itself. Out of an All The Diamonds mare, Rathcoona Paddy won numerous classes as a foal when he was third in the All-Ireland Irish Draught colt foal championship at Ballinasloe.

He was entered in Saturday's sale with some cross-country and hunting experience behind him and here his new owner explained why she bought the 17hh gelding.

"I have always been a fan of Irish-breds and have owned many Connemaras throughout my life. I currently have a Connemara Oldenburg cross who is only four but coming along nicely. My daughter, who is 12, decided that she wanted her for herself and has been working lovely with her. I then wanted to find myself something," said Kati McCormack Amarantes.

"There are very limited Irish-breds in the States, so I decided to go directly to the source. I wanted to find something big with potential and a good personality – I can handle the finishing work. When I saw Rathcoona Paddy (whose name will be Moose), he was the perfect size, and after watching him move, I knew he had potential."

McCormack Amarantes added: "On the day of the auction, I watched him online in the performance ring. He entered and had a small spook and I wanted to see what his reaction would be after that. It was simple, he immediately settled down and showed his job – I knew then that I wanted him. This was my first time going down this online route and I am extremely excited to see how the horse is in person and look forward to his arrival!"

Long journey

The second horse sold to the US was facing an even longer journey as James Creagan's traditionally bred three-year-old Clogherboy Cruiser (Lot 77) was purchased for €5,300 by Californian Joe Rich. Another grey, this Cougar gelding, who is out of the Gleneven Rebel mare Bonnie Lady, was successfully shown in-hand.

Also knocked down for the top price of €8,200 was Niamh Smith's Bonmahon Queen Clover (Lot 126) but this eight-year-old chesnut wasn't immediately facing into a flight abroad having been purchased by Co Laois's Simon Purcell.

Due to Covid-19 restricting the public appearances of this mare's young rider,

she has done very little other than some hunting. However, the daughter of Clover Flush has a good pedigree being out of the Puissance mare Miss Avaleen, a full-sister to Dromgurrihy Blue (CCI4*).

Pat Lombard from Headford, Co Galway gave €8,100 for Siobhan Cashin's unnamed dun ID mare (Lot 152). A four-year-old by Cloneyhea Spellbound out of the Gentle Diamond mare Gentlest Ginger (who has been bred exclusively to ID stallions), this eye-catcher has done some hound exercise and been schooled cross-country.

There are very limited Irish-breds in the States, so I decided to go directly to the source. I wanted something big with potential

Among the many purchases made by Jim Derwin was another dun, the top-priced pony Carmelia's Girl (Lot 43) for whom the Athlone dealer gave Michael Healy €8,000. This 2017 mare was described by her vendor as "a lovely, quality type who has been to a few training shows."

Healy received €6,500 from Niall Daly for the year-older Tawnytaskin Holly (Lot 25), "a more blood type that has done a bit more". Both mares are by the Connemara stallion Bog Mac Bobby.

"I like selling at Mullingar," said the Boyle vendor. "At this sale last year, I got €6,100 from Jim Derwin for a very nice Connemara and €4,600 for another pony."

Rewarding trip

Alannah Friel (plus her mother, and driver, Mamie) was rewarded for her long journey down from Clonmany in Co Donegal when Derwin gave €7,200 for Lot 34, her 12-year-old 148cms gelding Mack (aka Clonmany Air Express).

A grey like his sire, Mullins Celtic, Mack was bred by the vendor's father Denis out of a mare owned by her late maternal grandfather, Donald Devlin. He was broken by Aisling Doherty at her Crana Stables but otherwise Alannah, who is now 19, produced the gelding all along, taking part in Irish Pony Club activities as a member of the East Donegal Branch, winning working hunter pony competitions and qualifying for the Northern Ireland Festival, as well as jumping successfully at local agricultural shows.

"It was a big undertaking entering the sale (they were the first to do so when entries opened last month) as we had to go all the way to Omagh (roughly a two-hour journey) to get the pony vetted," revealed Mamie.

Alannah has retained a five-year-old half-sister to Mack whose deceased dam, Inis Jean, was a bit of a celebrity up on the north Donegal coast as she was at one time owned by Paddy McGonigle of the Ballyliffin Hotel and used to pull a trap for wedding parties. And, as much

Rathcoona Paddy (Lot 139) was the joint sale-topper at Mullingar Sales when sold to American buyer Kati McCormack Amarantes for €8,200 \ John McCauley



as it pains me to write this, when Donegal beat Dublin in the 1992 GAA football championship, Inis Jean pulled the Sam Maguire Cup all around Inishowen!

Among the successful Britain-based purchasers at the sale was Gillian Chippendale who bought two four-year-old Connemara mares, parting with €7,300 for Keith Wilson's well-produced Cindy Bell (Lot 27), a bay by Dunloughan Scot out of Millie The Kid, by Earl Of Castlefrench.

On a warm and sunny day, when the lots forward looked particularly well in the performance ring, there were online sales to purchasers throughout Ireland and Britain and to Sweden (two) and Germany (one).



The top-priced pony was Carmelia's Girl (Lot 43) who was purchased by Jim Derwin for €8,000 \ John McCauley