

CAREER TRANSITION

CASE STUDY: JOCKEY to SPORTS PSYCHOLOGIST

Name: Aodhagan Conlon **Age:** 32

From: Ireland, now living in Bath

Riding Career Summary:

Rode 36 winners as a Conditional jockey in the UK from 2010 – 2014 based with trainers Rebecca Curtis and Tom George. Biggest success was aboard Black Jack Blues. He suffered a serious fall in 2012 and retired officially in 2014.

New Career: Sports Psychology

Support from Player Association:

Aodhagan approached JETS after getting injured. He had always been interested in the psychological mindset side of sport and wanted to pursue a career in that area. JETS helped him choose the appropriate course at Bath Spa University and provided him with a Scholarship towards both his degree course and subsequent Masters qualification. The PJA has now employed Aodhagan as a Performance Consultant running workshops with young jockeys and offering 1-2-1 consultations to address mental aspects of riding.

Career Transition Highlights:

- Sense of achievement in gaining First Class honours degree, distinction in a masters and being accepted to complete a PhD.
- Finding a career which allows Aodhagan to carry on riding (as an exercise rider for trainer Paul Nicholls) and work in the racing industry.
- Helping jockeys improve their mindset and seeing their confidence and results improve.

Career Transition Challenges:

- Taking final decision to officially retire in order to focus on studies.
- Tackling books and studying having been used to a more active lifestyle.



“ **It’s never too early to start thinking outside your racing career. There’s time in the off season to try out new things. Not only does it add to your CV but I think you get a different perspective on life.** ”

I love racing but it can become a bit of a bubble at times and when you interact with people outside the industry, I believe you become a more rounded individual and that can only help you in all aspects of life, including your riding. ”