

# Chandler caught up in Arc arrests

Victor Chandler, one of Britain's best-known bookmakers, is understood to be one of a group of bookies arrested during the Arc de Triomphe meeting at Longchamps on Sunday for illegally taking bets.

The group, including Chandler's nephew and rails representative Butch Beaton-Brown, were caught in a raid on the corporate facility for British racegoers run by Horse Racing Abroad, who take around 1,300 punters to the Arc in Paris every year.

Chandler, one of the first bookmakers to start an online business, which he runs from Gibraltar, was questioned by French police officers from their racecourse gambling unit and told not to leave the country before a further interview yesterday.

Chandler stayed overnight in a suite at the fivestar George V Hotel just off the Champs-Elysees. His wife answered the room's phone and when asked whether her husband had been arrested on a gambling charge, she responded: 'Not exactly, you'll have to talk to Victor.'

Victor Chandler's PR spokesman Neal Wilkins, first asked for a comment on Sunday evening, said he still had no 'concrete news' 24 hours later before issuing a short statement, which said: 'Four people from Victor Chandler were questioned by French police on Monday in respect of various aspects regarding entertaining at Longchamps. They were subsequently released without charge.'

Ian Fry, boss of Horse Racing Abroad, said he had seen none of the party of more than 10 gendarmes who raided his pavilion premises at Longchamps, nor had he seen Chandler at the

racecourse.

Yet Thierry Delegue, a director of French racing's ruling body, said: 'The police have arrested three English bookmakers.'

Last year multi-millionaire Chandler employed PR specialist Max Clifford and won a court injunction preventing publicity when an embittered former VC employee threatened to reveal the household football name who gambled GBP 12million in a year as well as other reckless punters, including Premier League managers and players.