

David Allan, a champion for the South African cause

“We need to gather together bright young industry minds and get them to give their input. We need to create activity, business and careers and international interaction to sustain the industry going forward...”

HERE is a shortened profile on leading bloodstock agent David Allan of Allan Bloodlines, who will be writing a weekly column for the Turf Talk Newsletter. Our thanks to Sporting Post for use of this writing, edited to suit.

David Allan is a bloodstock consultant and manager, also an owner and breeder in South Africa. He has been involved in the local racing industry for approaching 15 years. He is kind and affable, but is very serious when it comes to his dedication to safeguarding and developing South Africa's presence in the global market.

David spends roughly six months in the UK and six months in South Africa and says: “I've always been passionate about South Africa. There's a special energy about the place and I'm happy to have the opportunity to be involved here. It's my home from home.”

He tells: “My wife Yoshi and I own 15 broodmares in the Cape, 12 outright and 3 in partnership. I directly manage another 20 for overseas mare owners here and consult for others. I also manage a portfolio of six stallions, which I'm both passionate and cold-bloodedly optimistic about.” His stallion roster includes Gitano Hernando, Where's That Tiger, Elusive Fort, Lateral, Alado and the newly launched Fencing Master.

David, supported by pedigree and stud book expert Judy Brannigan who also breeds here, recently published ‘Thoroughbred Thoughts’ highlighting in public a number of issues that should be high on every racing and breeding stakeholder's agenda. In it, he tackles issues including the current sales schedule, the lack of a next gen-

eration – of racing professionals, not just fans – and despairs at why the local industry continues to be inward-looking.

All of these have one underlying factor in common – for the South African Thoroughbred industry to continue developing in a progressive manner, in line with current accepted international standards.

The Blue Book

Perhaps the best place to start is David and Judy's concern for our Part 1 status in the International Horseracing Federation's Blue Book, also known as the International Cataloguing Standards Book. The book was established in 1981 and is maintained by the International Race Planning Advisory Committee (IRPAC), in conjunction with the Society of International Thoroughbred Auctioneers (SITA). Racing countries were divided into 4 parts, with the world's major racing countries classified as Part I and lesser jurisdictions given Part II or Part III status and Part IV covering jumps racing.

A Part I country's racing activity has to be deemed of sufficient stature in terms of number of horses competing, number of races contested, and purse monies distributed, to justify their classification as being among the world's major racing countries. Catalogues will show their Group/Grade 1 races as Gr.1. That is not the case with Part 2/3 countries, with the excep-



-tion of some races that are internationally contested.

South Africa was accorded Part I status in October 1985, a classification it still holds alongside Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Peru, the UAE and the USA.

“Twenty to twenty-five years ago, Japan did not feature as a major player. Now they breed some of the best horses in the world and are solid Part I players.

“South Africa’s Part 1 status should be regarded as an industry asset and protected for the sake of the industry as a whole.

“It’s something to be conscious of and not taken for granted. Imagine what would happen if we lost our Part I status and then the export protocols were sorted out?” he asks.

“While we are marooned by the EU ban”, says David “it is crucial that we maintain a professional

His activities when overseas are largely channelled to exactly that effort through e-mailings tailored for overseas readership about South Africa and many regular conversations at northern hemisphere sales, on racecourses and training grounds.

He is widely recognised as a “South Africa link” and has brought substantial overseas investment into breeding here as well as introducing owners through CPYS purchasing and small shares in racehorses.

“Some exciting high priced purchasing in Europe is of course taking place. My goal is to prepare for more mid-range two-way cross trading in breeding stock”.

“Fortunately we are making strides with AHS, so with a bit of luck, things will change and when the markets open up, we want to be in that swim, but that will require us to do some planning and ensure that we keep growing and developing over the next 5-10 years.”



David Allan and his wife, Yoshie, at Royal Ascot.



Sales in a shrinking market

“To me the main message here is shrinkage – of owners, breeders, sales prices and the South African market in general. That’s something we need to guard against in order to maintain the health of our industry and our share in the global market.”

He has some thoughts on how to achieve this. “There is universal agreement that we have far too many yearling sales and with sales companies vying for custom with generous socialising opportunities, we are diluting their core function. Having all these sales dates inevitably means clashes with other international events as was evidenced recently with BSA and CTS having newly scheduled sales to clash with York, Tattersalls Yearlings and Tattersalls Foals.

“We don’t need any more than four yearling sales and my suggestion would be firstly the CPYS – vendors have learned how to prepare for it, it is an elite sale and a logistical masterpiece and if the likes of Coolmore and the China Horse Club support it in partnerships, that can only be a good sign.

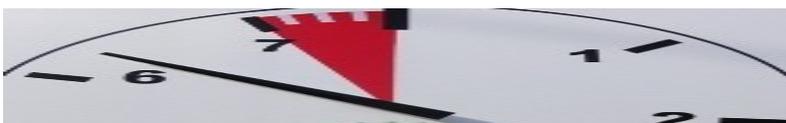
“Then a single Cape March sale – not both Val de Vie and CTS. It has to be a regional sale, but without sales race expenses attached. Most trainers need to buy on a budget, and regional sales are a good way to address the middle section of the market. Those are the sort of horses that keep the smaller owners in the game, they fill fields and very often, they win races. Keep the compulsory sales race expenses out and the sale will flourish.”

Next on his list is a single sale in Johannesburg. “I don’t mind who manages the sale – whether it be TBA in its new phase, CTS or even a coalition, but surely the figures show that one consolidated sale, not two fragmented ones is logical.” And then lastly, “a combination of KZN Yearlings and the TBA 2 year old sale rolled together.”

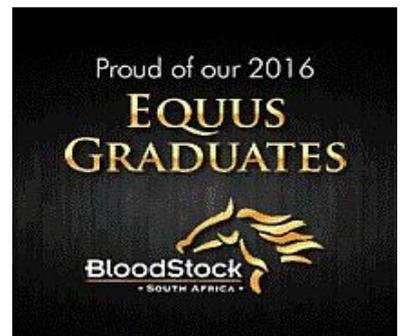
“We have a limited population and as statistics bear out, there is constant slippage. We lack a new generation, not just racing fans, but layers of young professionals coming up through the ranks. We need to gather together bright young industry minds and get them to give their input. **TT.**

Sectional Timing is close

It seems like it is all systems go for Gold Circle to lead the pack and go live with the sectional timing of races with effect from this Sunday’s Scottsville meeting.



It appeared that sectional timing tests were introduced during the meeting at Greyville on Wednesday night and Raf Sheik, Racing Executive at Gold Circle, commented: “After months of on-going testing on course, we are now ‘ironing’ out minor technical issues and hope to go ‘live’ at Scottsville on Sunday, 4 September,” said Sheik.



**TO ADVERTISE WITH US
PLEASE CONTACT JO ON
083 399 6353;
OR JUSTINE ON
084 922 2241**

Vaal's Heritage will be a grand occasion

WITH a month to go until the running of the inaugural R750 000 Grand Heritage at the Vaal, trainers of the 101 entries are scrambling to get their runners into races before the supplementary stage cut-off date.

It is an express condition of the event that in order to be part of the 28-runner field a horse must have run at least once between the date of first entries, which was August 8, and the final supplementary date on September 19. The final field will be revealed on September 21.

It's also a matter of impressing the panellists in charge of selecting the final field given that another condition of the race is that the Operator reserves the right to determine the final field by way of invitation and may exclude a horse at its sole discretion.

A number of entrants have already managed to record victories since being put forward as possible participants in The Grand Heritage including the likes of Jubilee Line, Man's Inn, Noah's Ark, Silver Class, Thrust, Trip To Paradise, Belenos, Miracle Bureau and National Key.

The Grand Heritage will be run over 1 475m and weights will be set in three tiers. Tier one will see runners allotted 57kgs and above, tier two starts at 53kg up to 56.5kg and tier three has weights set between 50kg and 52.5kg.

In anticipation of the cavalry charge and to accommodate the 28-runner field the rail separating the two Vaal tracks will be removed on a card where big fields are the order of the day.

All Grand Heritage entries will automatically be entered in the R250,000 Heritage Consolation Handicap race over the same course and distance and there will be a maximum of 28 runners in this event too.

There will also be two R150,000 handicap races over 1200m and these will also each have a maximum of 28 runners. The four big field races will form the Jackpot on the day.

The event is shaping into one of the highlights on the Highveld racing calendar and racegoers will be able to enjoy the action from the comfort of the Riverside and Ascot Rooms from R295 per person. Alternatively there will be enough of a variety of food stalls on offer to satisfy the taste of racegoers.

There's also entertainment on offer for kids as well as a big screen to keep rugby fans happy with the Rugby Championship clash between the Springboks and Australia. Popular DJ Vin Deysel will keep the vibe going on what promises to be a fantastic day's racing. **-TT.**