

Bloodstock Expertise - at home & abroad -

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The David Allan Column

## Today in Newmarket and the evolution of elite bloodstock sales



IN earlier despatches here, we noted the demise of the sales races for Europe's top yearling sale.

Actually "demise" is a word that can be applied not only to various sales races, but also to elite yearling sales in general.

Keeneland July used to be isolated from the company's huge September Yearling Sales at which (in 2016) the first Lot was Lot 1 and the last Lot was Lot 4,479. The six consecutive Books included at the top end what used to be the July Yearlings. The July Sale had become reliant on most of its money coming from a narrow band of buyers.

OK, USA being USA, their "narrow" is broad, but the fire was fuelled by the Sangster and Maktoum battles and on from there. Eventually with yearlings being primed for sales a couple of months earlier than their somewhat less "elite" cousins, the whole

thing became too specialised to work if demand dropped off even a little.

Right now in Newmarket, inspections for Book 1 (starts on Tuesday) are going on apace. The old Highflyer later Houghton Sale had also relied on – largely – half a dozen buyers. If you were not one of the "ones they wanted" and you were in that sale, you were up a gum tree because relatively few other buyers attended. Later, they would flood Park Paddocks for what used to be the Tattersalls October Yearling Sale – the engine room of the yearling market in Europe. That is now Book 2. Kind of.

When two main Houghton buyers passed away in rather quick succession, the projections changed. This and other factors took that sale into a new Book 1. Larger than the elite sale. Not by too much, but enough to encourage a broader buying commu-



nity to have a go. Many breeders were – and some still are - wary of Book 1, not wanting to be “unwanted” by the fewer buyers. Top end prices in Book 2 are very nice, thank you very much.

But Tattersalls has worked hard to make Book 1 a cross between elite and egalitarian. Last year’s Book 1 & 2 medians were 150,000 guineas (currently about R 2.8 million) and 47,000 guineas (around R 880,000) respectively but there is more cross-over than you would think. Books 3&4 then follow 1&2. Nearly a couple of thousand yearlings all told.

To further bolster the “commercial” sector of demand in Book 1 – as opposed to deep pockets wanting this or that yearling and going hammer and tongs – Tattersalls dropped their Millions Races (of which there were six – and at the risk of harping on about this point – entry like all other sales races is three months later onwards and voluntary with no levy on vendors).

In the new Bonus Scheme, by making a fairly modest voluntary payment later in the year, owners can benefit from a great many £25,000 bonuses for winning maidens. A kind of very widespread “extra

stakes”. As a result, the more commercial buyers are encouraged to have a stronger go.

**What does this mean for South Africa? Well that’s not really the point. The point is that the more stakeholders and fans in South Africa are familiar with how things work elsewhere, the broader the perspective when making decisions or giving opinions.**

It is hard to see the demise of Cape Premier Yearling Sale when it is – as I have described it in these columns – a logistical masterpiece and an event unto itself. As long as its economics can be sustained by promoters and visitors alike, it ain’t broke so don’t fix it.

If any factors change – and reliance on just a few individuals or institutions in any walk of life engenders the risk of change, however currently unlikely – that would be different. Would it elide with CTS March like Keeneland July did with September? In theory, but the Keeneland Sales were at the same owned venue thus occasioning only a minor change in “feel”.

*The Tattersalls “Home Book video” indeed has a video within it.*

The same brilliant complex. Same pizzas. The difference between CTICC and the Durbanville Sales Centre is somewhat more marked.

There is another factor that is unique to South Africa. CTS is backed and/or run by people who actually buy horses. You can have one of two points of view about this:

One is that it is a different experience to travel to a sale and be outbid by the sales company people who have urged you to come. "Anywhere else" in mainstream bloodstock, sales company shareholders and directors generally don't own racehorses and do not expose themselves to the risk of conflict of interest. Market places have room for – and need - all layers.

**The other viewpoint is that of the vendors whose interests are the fundamental duty of a sales company. To have a corps of buyers "built in" to a sales company, bidding and underbidding, is a heck of a bonus.**

Another positive feature of CPYS in its January slot is that it clashes with little else globally. People can come. As we urge the SA sales companies to continue their efforts to streamline the sales programme, we also urge them to avoid clashes such as the new Johannesburg Ready To Run dates "taking out" the few very dedicated overseas participants, be they pinhooking vendors or buyers.

Tattersalls Foals just cannot be missed. Readers would be very welcome to come and see why! - tt

## Young trainers building a legacy for Geoff Woodruff

IT doesn't happen often that a new trainer's first two career winners are both landed in feature events.

Candice Dawson, who trains a 20-odd string for the Ralphs family at a private facility near Randjesfontein, followed her first winner, Like A Boss (Flamingo Mile, R200,000, August) with Prince Of Orange, who won the R250,000 WSB Heritage Consolation at the Vaal on Saturday.

Dawson has only sent out 20 runners and looks set for a good career. Interestingly, she cut her teeth for many years under former Champion Trainer Geoff Woodruff, alongside another up-and-coming ace trainer Johan Janse Van Vuuren – they were both assistants to Woodruff for over 10 years in the days when he was still based at the Vaal

Van Vuuren himself had a spectacular afternoon on Heritage Day meeting when he bagged the R750,000 Grand Heritage with Irish Pride and saddled three other winners on the big day.

It is evident that both Janse Van Vuuren and Dawson acquired from Woodruff the rare skill of preparing a horse for a specific race– something punters should keep in mind when studying races featuring their runners. There is undoubtedly more big-race successes coming from the pair.

And so, the Woodruff legacy is well on its way. - tt



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*Candice Dawson.*

### Smart Call latest

THERE was no further news on Sunday about Alec Laird's filly Smart Call, who trotted out lame on Saturday, hours before she was due to line up in the Gr1 Sun Chariot Stakes at Newmarket. The stable reported on Saturday that further veterinary check-ups were necessary, but have been tight-lipped since. -tt

## Winx, Bowman take prize awards at Australian ceremony



*Jockey Hughie Bowman on star mare, Winx.*

THE Chris Waller-trained multiple Group One winner Winx (Street Cry) was named Australia's Horse Of The Year in Sydney last Thursday evening.

Winx was unbeaten in seven starts as a four-year-old last season, with her victories including the Epsom Handicap (Gr 1, 1,600m), Cox Plate (Gr 1, 2,040m), Chipping Norton Stakes (Gr 1, 600m), George Ryder Stakes (Gr 1, 1,500m) and Doncaster Mile (Gr 1, 1,600m).

**The daughter of the late Darley shuttler Street Cry (Machiavellian), who won the Champion Sire award, Winx polled 59 of the 60 votes cast by members of the racing media nationwide.**

"Winx is not just one of the greatest mares we have seen for many years, she is now adored by the pub-

lic and has become the 'people's horse'," Racing NSW chief executive Peter V'landys said.

"We have seen crowd figures swell whenever she races and she's now taken on a 'Black Caviar' type status."

Bred by Fairway Thoroughbreds and sold at the 2013 Magic Millions Gold Coast Yearling Sale from the draft of Coolmore Stud for \$230,000, Winx has now earned \$7,135,425 in prize money.

Winx's regular jockey Hugh Bowman was crowned Group One Jockey Of The Year for 12 victories at the highest level, including two in Hong Kong.

Waller, meanwhile, was awarded the Bart Cummings Award for the leading Group One trainer with Waller having trained 15 Group One during the 2015-16 campaign. —AZN Bloodstock.



# There is just none greater than Galileo



COOLMORE stallion Galileo underlined his greatness as a sire by supplying the first three home in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe on Sunday, with daughter Found beating the colts Highland Reel and Order Of St George - all trained by Aidan O'Brien.

Remarkably, this was the fifth time progeny of Galileo had swept the board in a Group 1 contest, with Minding leading home Ballydoyle and Alice Springs in both this season's 1,000 Guineas and the 2015 Moyglare Stud Stakes; Australia beating Kingfisher and Orchestra in the 2014 Irish Derby; and Sixties Icon demoting The Last Drop and Red Rocks to the places in the 2006 St Leger.

Until Found won on Sunday, the Arc had been a rare prestigious contest to have eluded Galileo as a sire, a surprising situation considering his dam Urban Sea and half-brother Sea The Stars both won the race. - *Racing Post*.

## SA pair unplaced at Chantilly

Harry's Son and Same Jurisdiction clearly needed their runs when finishing unplaced in the Grade 1 Qatar Prix De La Foret over 1400m at Chantilly Racecourse in France on Sunday.

Harry's Son, who is now in the care of trainer Cesar Alonso Pena and was ridden by Piere Strydom, was not all that well away and was towards the rear for much of the journey but he did stay on and is sure to improve for this run.

Same Jurisdiction was always near the rear. - **tt**

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