



Newsletter

MONDAY, 30 JANUARY 2017

The David Allan column



Thoughts provoked by a TDN article



Our horses are raised by professionals, and they compete successfully around the world. (Wayne Marks).

IN the Thoroughbred Daily News (TDN) on Saturday 21 January – the day of the first evening session of the Cape Premier Yearling Sale – an American agent named Justin Casse wrote an article. It is a diary-type of piece about his visit to South Africa. Initially Mr Casse dwells very enthusiastically on the industry as it is practised in Australia – no doubt with good cause.

Moving from Australia on to South Africa, he continues: *“There is a great disparity from the horses you will find in South Africa and there is nothing wrong with that. These aren’t professional sales horses in Cape Town; they are au natural. The amount of money they will bring and the amount of money that they will run for is considerably less than most places in the world (especially Australia). Sales horses in*

Australia, Europe and in North America are for the most part ‘professional’ sales horses, but in South Africa I believe the market of raising race horses is more of a hobby than a business.”

At the AllanBloodlines table at the sales, we had people from Ireland, England, Scotland and South Africa. There was a howl of outrage at the article from one UK citizen (breeding in South Africa) not only on her own behalf but also on behalf of the studs at which she boards mares. The Scot, in perfect characterisation of the breed, muttered very darkly rather than howled. Someone sounding like me said *“Screw that!”*

Mr Casse is clearly not sniping with malicious intent, however he or his editor might have **(cont p2)**

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made it read as such in the particular paragraph. He sets forward arguments for doing business in/with South Africa that reflect his catching up with events and developments in the country – which is one of the intended effects of invitations to visit for the Sales.

And he signed for a Frankel at 4 million and a Trippi at 2 million which is a lot more than I did. (In defence, our 2 million budget was not enough for the several that we valued at that level and our purchase for a few hundred thousand was – I would say wouldn't I? – bloody good value).

Nevertheless, the South African stud farms with which we work and the stud farms whose owners and managers we know well are not hobbyists. They have bottom lines to which to work which are alarmingly, scarily threatened through disappointing results at the dissipated run of too many (other) sales.

Farm cash flow is assisted by side businesses – perhaps flowers or meat or grapes or shavings – indicating enterprise, energy and a dedication to making it all work (to the bottom line).

If today were Day 1, sales reform and export/import flow would be described as two of the most exciting prospects in our industry and sport. But it is not Day 1, so a more apt description might be: two means to redress negative balances and get us back on (professional) track. Many are holding not only thumbs but also their breath.

From 2015 to 2016, no less than 11 consignors disappeared from the National Yearling Sales catalogue. There might have been one new one. That probably means the withdrawal of net 10 breeders who couldn't make it work, not hobbyists who couldn't be bothered any more.

Mr Casse may well be offering a compliment, unintentionally back-handed, by saying that the yearlings on offer at CPYS are not professional sales yearlings but are “au naturel”.

One would guess that means less intensely prepped. To some, that is a matter of considerable merit.

I happen to think that a certain Silvano colt at CPYS was/is one of the best colts in the sale but compared to others, he was, whilst gleaming with health, considerably underdone and more suited to a later sale. Buyers did not agree with me, wanting something “earlier”.

In Australia, where Magic Millions has been offering yearlings at this extraordinarily early time for years, but also elsewhere at CPYS, there were earlier sorts aplenty.

But hang on a minute! If our SA yearlings are not professionally prepared, why are we even comparing? Are we operating in an isolated set of standards that is behind other nations? No.

“Buyers” visiting CPYS from overseas are generally agents/consultants with or without clients in attendance. Those people inspect top and middle range yearlings around the world and would all say this “*When good SA horses have the opportunity to compete internationally, many of them do so very strongly*”. And they might add “*Having gone through a hell of a trial to get there in the first place*”. How much higher would the flag be flown if they did not have to loaf around in lengthy lock down?

JAY PEG was raised on Hemel ‘n Aarde land. ASHAAWES at Oldlands Stud coincidentally in the

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same valley. Raised by hobbyists? Nope. Without being professionally prepared? Nope. Just start with the attention to soil and nutrition (without the benefit of Irish carpets of grass) and work from there.

Of course we must listen. We must compare. There is always room for improvement/development/staff training/experience/new kit but when we consider the lack of international interaction brought about by distance, AHS isolation and a weak currency making personnel exchanges difficult, SA is producing proudly.

With streamlined sales and protocols facilitating exports that finance imports and exchanges, that great big African sky is the limit! - tt.

Arrogate, champion of the world!

ARROGATE ran away with the \$12m Pegasus World Cup, the richest horse race ever staged, as the much anticipated rematch with California Chrome failed to produce the hoped-for fireworks. California Chrome turned in the weakest performance of his career, being obviously beaten on the turn for home and fading into ninth place of the dozen runners at Gulfstream Park in Florida.

Among those to recognise that the popular chestnut simply failed to show up was the winning jockey, Mike Smith, who said: "Chrome just didn't fire his race today at all. Believe me, that's not the California Chrome I know."



He said about Arrogate: "Getting out was the anxious part ... Being able to get out, let him stretch his legs, because that's what he's good at. He's got some turn of foot, he's got some stride."

Arrogate's trainer, Bob Baffert, also paid tribute to his beaten rival, saying: "I feel bad about California Chrome. He just didn't bring his race today, so that match-up never came about. But it's great to be here. I never thought I'd be here in a \$12m race, I won my first Grade One race here ... I'm a little emotional."

There was no immediate explanation for why California Chrome had fared so poorly, having been first or second in his previous 11 races since 2014. "He didn't look real comfortable," said his trainer. – *NYT*.



KLAWERVLEI STUD



COOP DE GRACE (USA)



Massive cash rewards for CTS graduates

Speedy filly, Live Life and very handsome colt William Longsword won the CTS Sprint and CTS Mile respectively at Kenilworth on Saturday. These richly endowed races for three year olds carried stakes of 500,000 USD each.

Qualifying graduates from the 2015 Cape Premier Yearling Sale, the 2015 CTS March Yearling Sale and the 2015 Emperor's Palace Yearling Sale were eligible. Doing the currency conversions, prize money amounted to around R6,6 million for each CTS race – half of that hefty sum accruing to the winner's.

Part of Africa's Richest Race-day, the CTS Sprint over 1200m was run at a strong gallop, which worked ideally for Live Life and she was able to produce the same powerful closing burst that enabled her to snare Grade 1 heroine, Carry on Alice in the Sceptre Stakes three weeks ago.

Carol Bass remarked, "She's very good and the fast pace suited her. The form to Carry On Alice is franked, as she's now gone on to win the Flying Champs."

Live Life, by Trippi out of the National Assembly mare Viva, made a big move in the centre under jockey, Grant van Niekerk to sneak in.

Bred by Avontuur Thoroughbred Farm and purchased by Piet du Toit's Hunkydory Investments for R2,5 million at CPYS 2015, the bay filly was winning her fourth race from nine starts for trainer Candice Bass Robinson.

Always in Charge was gallant, only being outrun in the final strides. Bred at Klawervlei Stud, this classy son of Captain Al, who won the Gold Medallion at two and races off an official merit rating of 108, seems sure to enjoy a productive career.

Attenborough made up plenty of ground to clinch third place. The son of Western Winter was bred by Pippa Mickleburgh and belongs to Mayfair Speculators, the same connections that campaign the second horse.

Punters weren't deterred by an awkward barrier draw sending William Longsword off as a firm 16/10 favourite for the CTS Mile on the back of an assertive victory in the Cape Guineas in mid-December. Just as in that prestigious race, he used natural gate-speed to get over to secure a handy position then used his powers of acceleration to blast away in the stretch.

After attaining placings in the Sprint, owners Mayfair Speculators went one better here. William Longsword is a magnificent specimen and was expertly prepared by Vaughan Marshall. John Koster, of Klawervlei Stud envisages an exciting future as a stallion for this son of Captain Al, "He is some horse, and the timing is perfect for him to go to stud."



Long-striding Longsword: Another big win!

Copper Force, by Royal Air Force, ran huge to snare the Philanthropist gelding, Singapore Sling for second. He was drawn on the far outside and raced wide at the back of the field before launching a spirited bid in the straight.

Breeder, Dr Ian Heyns was full of praise for Copper Force's brave try, whilst also speaking fondly of the dam, Eastern Copper, "She is just a little thing, not even 14 hands and this is her only foal of size." Fourth spot went to Janoobi. He too was poorly drawn yet managed to get into the fray to provide healthy earnings for connections.

Both incentive races generated a really special buzz and showcased thoroughbred racing at its best – the lucrative prize money is obviously greatly rewarding for equine investors; racing fans were treated to quality fields and a stirring spectacle.
- Mark van Deventer.



Markus Jooste: “The scripts were written!”



A group of happy connections after the running of the Gr1 Investec Cape Derby. (Wayne Marks).

MAYFAIR Speculator’s Markus Jooste said that the script had worked out perfectly after they’d won the inaugural \$500 000 CTS Mile at Kenilworth on Saturday with William Longsword in what is likely to have been the champion colt’s last appearance before going to stud at Klawverlei.

“The script was written, again, this is a dream come true!” enthused Jooste after trainer Brett Crawford’s Edict Of Nantes had won the Gr1 Investec Cape Derby under Frankie Dettori. Not only was the winner sired by Investec founder Bernard Kantor’s stallion Count Do Bois, but Dettori is a brand Ambassador for the banking giant and has now won an Investec Derby on two continents after his success on Golden Horn in the 2015 renewal of the Epsom Downs edition.

Kantor himself was smiling from ear to ear and said that Dettori had agreed to attend the meeting after a few glasses of wine. The jock was over the moon, saying, “Edict Of Nantes gave an honest effort. I’ve got the Derby in the bag!”

Thousands of local racing fans were hoping that Dettori could win at least one race on the day so that everyone could see his famous flying dismount – a wish granted by racing’s Gods just after Edict Of Nantes entered the winner’s enclosure to huge applause. - **tt**.

‘The Admiral’ at the Sun Met

AMONG the usual merry band of character at Saturday’s Sun Met was renowned digital artist Johan Nissen (photo) from Denmark.

Johan, who calls himself “The Admiral”, says he fell in love with South Africa when he came to the Queen’s Plate and the Met a few years ago. Now, he is an annual visitor.

“I want to leave Denmark, South Africa is a great place,” reckons Johan, whose work can be seen on www.johannissen.com.

