

The David Allan Column

Provoking thoughts on fashion and bargain buys this month



Galileo stallion Soldier Of Fortune covered 304 mares in 2016.

In 2016, Soldier of Fortune (Galileo) covered 304 mares in Ireland.

Over-production is on everyone's lips again in various different contexts but – closest to home for breeders – with reference to the clearance rates at sales. In Europe, the two recent February Mixed Sales (Tatts and Goffs) have grown in size but behaved very differently in terms of clearance.

Tattersalls pushed the envelope in 2016 in sticking to a one day format and having us all there for a 12 hour selling session well into a winter's night. No booze or food allowed in the ring, and little time to step away. In 2017, they went to two days and – because there was more on offer - welcomed a huge multi-national population including the farthest travelled from Australia, plus the local representa-

tives of overseas buyers who don't attend –such as me. The clearance rate was 90% and the average and median soared by 56-60%.

Goffs – where the sale was a one day affair as recently as 2013 – went from two to three days and may, like Warren Beatty, have opened the wrong envelope in going beyond critical mass. There the average and median dipped and the clearance rate was only 64%.

Around 400 of the 750 lots were over-production in your face: newly-turned yearlings that had missed the Foal Sales, which themselves were slaves to fashion. **(continued on page 2)**

ADVERTISE WITH TURF TALK
Phone Jo on 083 399 6353

DAVID ALLAN

At Tatts the accent and atmosphere was strongly on ability to *race on*. Pedigrees and sires have thus become irrelevant with colts and geldings and less relevant than measuring the further upside in a filly before breeding. Timeform tells you what you are buying along with your own research and conversations with “those who know the horse”. To put it bluntly, some vendors might “put away” an overseas visitor with half a story, but not someone they know and see regularly.

To counter that besmirchment, Godolphin and Juddmonte are among those who tell the truth to anyone warts and all. So how relevant were the pedigrees and sires in the first place?

What this quick review above shows is that production of young stock to sell is hitting the buffers unless in a narrow band of fashion. You can guess where I’m going with this but before arriving in South Africa, let’s have a quick look at the Irish/UK figures as a mini-story in themselves.

The 304 mares mentioned above are mostly jumping mares. That busy sector is not worried about foaling dates because the results will not be asked to do anything before 3 or 4 years old, so the season is longer. People still get misty eyed at the memory of Istabraq (a brilliant champion hurdler by Sadler’s Wells who was an excellent sire of jumpers) so they look now to sons of Galileo like Irish Derby Winner Soldier of Fortune. Monsun is grandsire of hero chaser Sprinter Sacre, therefore three of his sons each covered 299, 274 and 248 mares. The list goes on.

On the flat, Kodiak topped the list (again) with 234 mares and lower cost first season Gutaihan (by Dark Angel) covered 203. Dark Angel himself covered 195 at a fee of €60,000 while perennially commercial Acclamation covered 104. Galileo (158), Golden Horn (first season 145), Gleneagles (145), Australia (137). Holy Roman Emperor at lower cost covered 120 in contrast to Henry the Navigator (25) who has moved on. Oasis Dream (107) has seen his fee adjusted downwards.

Alongside him at Juddmonte Frankel covered 102

mares before he had runners. Champs Elysees, Dansili’s full brother, covered only 60 and has been sold while the only “cheapie” at Juddmonte, Bated Breath, covered 131. Old fellow Invincible Spirit at the top of the tables still managed to get his legs over 151 mares, while stablemate at the Irish National, Free Eagle, covered 112 in his first season. Most of the Godolphins covered 100+ including Exceed and Excel and reverse shuttler Helmet who has done well enough with his first crop. Another travelling back to front is Sepoy, 109. I wonder what Captain Al and Dynasty would have done if reverse shuttling.

OK... back South Africa where some better sales have a clearly visible stallion bias resulting from being significantly influenced by somewhat polarised consigners who often use stallions that cover big books. It is inevitable.



CPYS is a much-admired event unto itself where more than 50% of an elite catalogue comes from four consigners. In contrast, some other sales see nice enough “Trainer’s Horses” going through with no bid. If less experienced owners and groups are not using their own agents/consultants who might advise them in this or that direction, those bill-payers will communicate their own inevitably narrow preferences.

Trainers do the consultancy job as well, many bringing ownership to less fashionable yearlings, but the inertia is in favour of the perceived-to-be-sexy stallions whether affordable or not, whether the best individuals or not. At a time when we are short of buyers, the opportunity to buy reasonably and well at the March and April sales and beyond is substantial.

Bloodstock Expertise - at home & abroad -

SA +27(0)21 828 9288 | SA mobile +27(0)72 740 9061
UK +44(0)1252 646611 | UK mobile +44(0)7774 697640
davidallan@allanbloodlines.com | www.allanbloodlines.com

AllanBloodlines

DAVID ALLAN

The not-obvious ones will be the value and many will be very nice, well produced youngsters.

The ultimate proof of the pudding is in auction or private sales of horses off the track. MRS DANVERS in England was minimum bid, buy-back yearling by a stallion who covered only 11 mares in 2016. Sent to lower profile but canny and pleasant Jonny Portman, she won five times at 2 including big stuff and is now worth a fortune. Her form is the thing. Her siblings and antecedents are largely irrelevant. As was her sire– the wrongly spelled Hellvelyn – who will cover more than 11 this year. - tt.



Mrs Danvers, carrying bottom weight due to her bottom price, beat 22 rivals to pocket £123,000 at Newbury in the Weatherby's Super Sprint. She went on to win a Listed and a Gr3, at 2 years of age.

Piggott's first Epsom Derby winner



By his teens a sensation in the racing world, Lester Piggott rode his first winner of the Epsom Derby on Never Say Die in 1954 aged 18 years (photo) and went on to win eight more! There is something about old racing photographs that makes one realise - no matter how many losers you've bought or backed - the game of thoroughbred racing never leaves your blood once it's in there We are fortunate indeed to be lovers of the world's greatest sport! (Pic: Daily Mail, UK).



Cape Yearling Sale
16 March, Mistico
13:00

Catalogue online
www.tba.co.za

KLAWERVLEI  STUD

betting WORLD
HORSERACING & SPORTS BETTING



MARCH
YEARLING SALE
18-19 MARCH 2017



Kuda
WWW.KUDA.CO.ZA



COOP
DE
GRACE
(USA)

GLOBAL VIEW (USA)
"A stunning son of Galileo.."



ASCOT STUD
Enquiries: 041.366.1181



Nother Russia, powerful winner from way back in the Acacia Handicap field. (JC Photos).

Watch SA racing live, even when visiting Mother Russia

IT's beneficial to be a member of Tellytrack.com, as Jessica Slack will tell you.

She was away on a fly-fishing trip last weekend (not near as far as Mother Russia but still remote), and far away from a television set, but managed to watch the Gr3 Acacia Handicap at Turffontein live on her laptop to see her filly Nother Russia land the honours with a riveting late run.

"It was a magic and amazing win and I am still pinching myself," she said on Sunday. "Craig Zackey rode a brilliant race, he has been with Nother Russia from the start and she trusts him!"

Nother Russia, by Tiger Ridge from Mother Russia, was 'pinched' from Jessica's mom Mary, who bred the filly. Jessica told: "I got her for a steal. Mike de Kock bid on her and when we got her, Mum went up to him and shrieked with delight that he had bought her and then asked who it was for. Mike laughed and said, "For your daughter!" - tt.



VEE Moodley, CEO Of Betting World, was the major recipient of a champagne shot from Mathew de Kock after the Betting World Gauteng Guineas, a race which yielded Mike de Kock's 3000th winner in Janoobi, owned by Sheikh Hamdan. The young De Kock told: "It's been a few long weeks to this milestone and this morning (Saturday) everyone came to me and said, 'Today Is The Day!' and I kept saying, "Don't jinx it, don't jinx it!", but here we are, we've done it, and all in features. It's a testament to the kind of man my dad is." - tt.



Mike de Kock missed his 3000th winner in South Africa and described his day as "bittersweet", after losing top performer Ertijaal (photo), in the Jebel Hatta. The five-year-old shattered a sesamoid and was put down immediately.

WATCH LIVE RACING AND REPLAYS LIVE ...AS IT HAPPENS.

ON ANY DEVICE **DAILY AND MONTHLY PACKAGES AVAILABLE**

REGISTER NOW ON **TELLYTRACK.COM**