



# Newsletter

MONDAY 9 JANUARY 2017

The David Allan Column



## My thoughts for South Africa's Racing and Breeding Year

“WE MUST KEEP ON TRYING!”

THE clarion call of betting interests is for full fields. This translates to a continuous need for a minimum number of thoroughbred foals to be produced, grown and offered for sale. If the production line sends out fewer foals, the goal of filling fields is threatened or unfulfilled.

So SA breeders must breed enough thoroughbreds right? Right. But there is a paradox. Most of them have to be bought to be candidates for full fields and there is a shortage of buyers.

Clearance rates at sales are not always clear. An original purpose of a declared buy-back internationally was transparency –to take such transactions (along with “not solds”) out of sales statistics which they would otherwise corrupt. Much was made of the latter benefit to the extent that in Europe, if not Australia, the buy-backers are charged half commissions as a reward for the declaration.

By meticulously going through SA sales results, fair analysis can be made up to a point. However sometimes a buy-backer will use someone to do the bidding and leave his or her name published. The saving in commission here is very small, not 50%. Alternatively, experienced observers at some of the sales with small catalogues can see clearly enough what is (and is not) happening.

In South Africa if the bought back (failed to sell) youngster is to go into training, either the unfulfilled vendor must pay to have the horse trained – thus becoming an extremely valuable person to the industry in being able to do so – or a second wave of searching for ownership takes place via trainers through leasing or “putting the horse together”, through syndicators, clubs and through personal contacts of the vendor.

Those people making that effort have little support from the industry in providing an “image” for ownership as a recreational activity. The principal motivation for many international owners is “to go racing with my horse”, not to go punting.



There is also a different form of buy-back: the intentional buy-back. Qualification for sales races here generates this practice and in some theatres of selling begs the regular question “is this horse actually for sale?” a syndrome that inevitably has impact on the credibility of the process.

All this leaves the bloodstock industry recycling the majority of the necessary ownership of racehorses amongst existing owners who – whether on the large scale or individual owners of a few or partners in several or syndicate members – are gold dust. Without them, no fields at all.

In the current climate of fallen sales prices at all but the elite end and of too many small sales fragmenting, the buying and consigning resources of the country across a far longer span of time than elsewhere, we cry out for new blood so that the trickle of breeder/vendors giving up or cutting back significantly does not turn into a faster flowing river of retrenchment. (to page 2...)

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## DAVID ALLAN

There might be a tough but fair argument that a lot of mares being bred are of insufficient quality and should drop out of the Stud Book. Sure. But well intentioned breeders who recognise a ropery pedigree when they have one would like to replace with something newer and fresher whether from at home or abroad. But if the end-user buying power for their products is limited, will they risk it?

There are two factors that would serve to “sort this out”.

One, as this column has said before and is not unique in so doing, is the consolidation of the sales programme back to something manageable: two jewels in the crown (Cape Premier Yearling Sale and National Yearling Sales), one important sale in the Cape in March in the old Vintage slot, the KZN Sale which has had some good years if not every time; then one 2 year old sale regaining historical importance and reliability.

Much thought must be put into the ReadytoRun situation where Summerhill’s numbers remain high but Balmoral’s have now gone completely. To fill a large gap, other consigners would have to increase capacity greatly which is a massive staffing, stabling and logistical challenge (and risk) in this form of trading.

Let us fervently hope for consolidation in 2017 in such a way that makes sense to the sales organisations as well as generating three rousing cheers from the breeding community.

The other factor is achieving a substantial injection of fresh ownership from outside the existing well. Day to day racing is promoted as a punting exercise. Not many punters want to be owners and not many people completely “outside” are enamoured by punting.

But South Africa has a wonderful history of horse racing being a sport for many to attend and participate in.....to “Go racing with my horse” not only to superb occasions like Saturday’s L’Or-

marins Queen’s Plate Day but also to Durbanville having a new track at a lovely place to go racing on an ordinary race day or balmy evening. And elsewhere.

If “the industry” has not the administrators with the will or wherewithal to create a department of people to beat the bushes in a systematic, modern attempt, surely the betting interests have. Maybe they could



*Pics above and below: People who “bond” with their horses enjoy the most important aspect of the sport, and more!*

submerge the punting aspects – with ultimate benefit to themselves - in a new form of marketing ownership that emphasises the magnificent animals, the sport and its people and history, with punting as a fun add-on.

We (AllanBloodlines) tried to take this forward in 2015/16 but found industry interests unwilling to cooperate with each other. We must keep trying, as with the consolidation of sales.

Logic dictates that if there is a shortage of buyers but betting interests need more horses in training, then betting interests may help themselves — and racing at large — by broadening the language of their outreach. –tt



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## BSA Graduates shine on L'Ormarins Queen's Plate Day



*Banner Hill (Richard Fourie), wins Gr3 Chairman's Cup.*

FORMER Bloodstock South Africa graduates dominated the G1 action on L'Ormarins Queen's Plate day last Saturday.

Not only did brilliant grey filly Bela-Bela land the G1 Maine Chance Farms Paddock Stakes, but BSA sold champion Legal Eagle won the G1 L'Ormarins Queen's Plate for a second year running – winning from another BSA graduate, in the form of G1 H F Oppenheimer Horse Chestnut Stakes winner, Captain America.

In the process, both Bela-Bela and Legal Eagle earned automatic berths in the 2017 Breeders' Cup World Championships, with Bela-Bela qualifying for the Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf and Legal Eagle for the Breeders' Cup Mile.

Another BSA graduate to land a graded win on the day was Maine Chance Farms bred gelding Banner Hill, who came from well off the pace to land the G3 BMW Chairman's Cup over 3200m.

By Danehill's multiple G1 winning son Tiger Hill, Banner Hill came through to provide the red hot combination of trainer Glen Kotzen and jockey Richard Fourie with yet another winner.

Banner Hill, a R450 000 buy from the 2014 Emperors Palace National Yearling Sale, has now won five times for owners Mesdames Devachander and Watson and the Triple H Trust.

Saturday's great results continued the great run that BSA sold thoroughbreds have enjoyed in 2017 – with former BSA buy, Light The Lights, having impressed when winning the Listed Singpiel Stakes in Dubai last week.—  
*BSA media release.*



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*Legal Eagle: With a bit of luck, he could represent South Africa at the Breeders' Cup in San Diego in November.*

## Brugman: “It is our intention to take 15 horses to the United States”

DEREK Brugman, Racing Manager of Markus Jooste’s Mayfair Speculators, said on Monday that they are keen to go to the United States with Legal Eagle and other runners – the main objective being to honour an open invitation to Legal Eagle to compete in the 2017 Breeders’ Cup World Championships, scheduled for 3 and 4 November at Del Mar Racecourse in San Diego.

For this to happen, shipping agent Candice Hobday will need to charter a flight to the US containing 15 horses, to be scheduled for early March.

Brugman explained: “It is our intention to go, but a few things will have to fall into place. We need 15 horses to fill the charter, and the flight alone will cost R7.5-million. It will be financially viable to share the flight with other owners and at this stage we have commitments from the connections of Marinaresco and Silver Mountain.

“We don’t want to fill the charter with our own horses just for the sake of it, we have a number that are good enough and will qualify, but ideally we’d like to get the support of other owners. The shipment can be filled with yearlings who are younger than 730 days, mares and sports horses.

“As noted in previous communications, colts (over the age of 730 days), have additional rules and requirements to adhere to \*(CEM) but being geld-

ings, Legal Eagle, The Conglomerate and Marinaresco will be allowed into the US after a 60-day lockdown period in quarantine, so too sports horses and mares.

“Breeders, for example, can send a mare on the same charter if they want her covered Northern Hemisphere time by a US stallion and sell the foal in the US, or alternatively cover the mare Southern Hemisphere time and bring her back to South Africa.

“These are options that will make it easier to get our plans in place, so we’re hoping to get support from our local owners and breeders with an eye on racing or breeding in the US.

“Yearlings bought at the Cape Premier Yearling Sale this month will also be able to get into the US on this charter because they will only reach the 730-day stage much later in the year and will get through quarantine with much time to spare.”

Brugman said that, if the plan comes to fruition, the Mayfair runners will be trained by selected leading US trainers in consultation with their South African trainers. **-tt.**

*\*We will be following up on South Africa’s CEM-status (Contagious Equine Metritis). South Africa was supposed to be declared CEM-free in December 2016.*



## Bela-Bela delights her connections at Varsfontein Stud

BELA-Bela, who was crowned Equus Champion 3YO Filly last season, won her second Gr1 race for Varsfontein Stud when she captured the Maine Chance Farms Paddock Stakes over 1800m at Kenilworth on Saturday for trainer Justin Snaith and jockey Anton Marcus.

The flashy grey, a R1 400 000 buy from the 2014 Emperors Palace National 2YO Sale, confirmed her status as South Africa's top distaffer with a professional win in Saturday's R1-million race –and also stamped herself as a hugely valuable future stud prospect.

A daughter of leading sire Dynasty, Bela-Bela is one of six stakes winners produced by Cheveley Stud's remarkable Royal Academy mare Mystic Spring, with the latter's other notable performers including ill-fated Equus Champion Rabiya.

"This is so exciting for Varsfontein," said owner Susan Rowett. "My dad (Tony Kalmanson), won the race in 1971 with Indira, trained by Terrance Millard. She became our foundation mare, and now we have another good filly in Bela-Bela.

"Congratulations to all including my brother John Kalmanson, who has been watching the Tellytrack live streaming with his daughters and will be jump-

ping up and down!"

Snaith said: "Bela-Bela is a lady, a real pleasure to train, She is beautiful, she reminds me of Dancer's Daughter." - tt.

## Tellina wins by 14 lengths!



SOUTH African bred Tellina, by Silvano, won a Conditions Race over 1500 at Neuss Racetrack near Dusseldorf, Germany, on Sunday.

The eight-year-old, raised and owned by Maine Chance Farms, swept clear by 14 lengths for trainer Andreas Wohler and Maine Chance spokesman Justin Vermaak said: "He may race next at the Snow Lake meeting in St Moritz, Switzerland." - tt.



*AT the L'Ormarins Queen's Plate on Saturday: Rubbing shoulders with the legend John Freeman (middle) is Geoffrey "Always Go For The Middle Stomp" Boycott OBE (left), and another former cricketer Michael Holding, the West Indian who was nicknamed "Whispering Death" for his quiet demeanour and accurate fast bowling.*

## Keeneland January Sale starts today

THE Keeneland January Horses Of All Ages Sale is set to commence today with 1,893 lots catalogued across the five-day sale.

The catalogue includes 726 broodmares, 147 broodmare prospects, 732 yearlings, 281 horses of racing age and seven stallions and stallion prospects, with 384 lots set to go under the hammer at the first session.

Among the broodmares offered, 173 are in foal to stallions such as American Pharoah (Pioneer Of The Nile) and Medaglia d'Oro (El Prado). Last year, 1,040 lots sold for a total aggregate of US\$35,463,000. - tt.

## Scottsville meeting is moved to Greyville

THE Scottsville race meeting scheduled to take place on Monday, 9 January 2017, has been moved to Greyville Racecourse as a polytrack race meeting.

All race times remain unchanged. Please note that Gold Circle reserves the right to cancel the race meeting should there be too many scratchings.

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