



Mondays with DAVID ALLAN



Yellow colours, including a Michael Roberts set, and a break from reality



A print of European Racehorse of 1988 Mtoto with Michael Roberts.

Last week was a trying week. I shan't trouble you with the reasons but it was nice when it ended.

With no plane to catch just yet, I could – as now, late on Sunday night – work in front of a screen but keep an eye on the Australian Grand Prix, and on England's cricketers off a great ODI run playing badly in New Zealand to a mostly empty stadium. I could keep minute by minute track of the grotesque actions and statements by Australian cricketers in Cape Town, hoping for the worst for them. And I could "cover" a lot of horse racing.

The weekend also brought some other cheer. The clocks went forward, promising those songbird chorus filled, light-til-10pm evenings that engender so much fun (and evening racing). Another cheer went up: the Start of the Flat.

That old-fashioned expression actually means the Start of the Turf Season but let's not throw tradition

out of the window because of winter racing on polytrack or tapeta that provides betting fodder at home and especially abroad as well as, strange but absolutely true, an opportunity for devoted owners of lesser lights to run for fun. I am quite often asked as the Turf is ending "Can't we pick something up at the Horses in Training Sales and run on the all-weather this winter?".

It is necessary to explain what it is like to freeze one's extremes at Wolverhampton on a midwinter evening, driving a few hours for the privilege, although Kempton and Lingfield not far from London offer warmer interior options. It all keeps the wheel turning.

Doncaster, the home of the St Leger, closes and opens the Turf Season. As soon as **(to page 2)**



Social Order wins the Kings Cup yesterday.

DAVID ALLAN (cont fm p 1)

Cheltenham is over, there is a sense that Spring is springing and that flat racing takes place on as-far-as-the-eye-can-see luscious lawns including the enormous Doncaster layout.

Meanwhile, Kenilworth then Greyville grabbed attention on another screen, with Tellytrack on-line having an impact on blood pressure by freezing or dropping the feed in spite of our 350Mbs where 50Mbs should be plenty. Some overseas owners racing in SA wait for the immediate *Attheraces* replays of SA racing. Sadly some simply give up.

At Greyville and at Doncaster, it was sets of yellow colours that drew me in most closely.

The Kings Cup (Grade 3) was won by SOCIAL ORDER for Messrs Kantor (yellow colours) and Van Niekerk. The gelding is by COUNT DUBOIS who raced in the same yellow colours but in the UK – and in Italy where he won the Group 1 Grand Criterium at 2 when Italian racing meant a hell of a lot more than it does at the moment. Later he was to sire good 2 year olds in South Africa. Admittedly, his stock came in all shapes and sizes, quite a few with the equine-sized proportions of Jack Russells, but quite a few downright gorgeous.

The female line is lovely – hence having a COUNT DUBOIS mare in our band - with his dam MADAME DUBOIS being out of a HABITAT mare out of a CREPELLO mare. COUNT DUBOIS was bred by Louis Freedman's successful Cliveden Stud. Their racing colours were yellow. It all fits.

Meanwhile, two very lightly raced horses of 4 and 5 years respectively excelled at Doncaster on Saturday, both in yellow colours of course – one set of which Michael Roberts wore with great distinction.

In his championship season, Michael's appetite for rides was voracious – he even rode for us. His expert agent the late Graham Rock "rang for the ride" and was right.

We won at Ascot – just a maiden - with PRIZE PUPIL (Royal Academy – Bestow) whom we bred. Not in yellow colours, as it happens.

But on MTOTO in the very yellow colours of Sheikh Ahmed al Maktoum, the least prolific brother, M. Roberts Esquire won three Group 1s (two Eclipses and a King George) and was second in the Arc, all on the son of BUSTED's crumbling feet, expertly trained by the late Alec Stewart .

Those same colours won The Lincoln Handicap on Saturday on ground softened by a wet winter and recently melted snow. By PIVOTAL (that ground should suit...), ADDEYBB is a 4 year old who had run just five times, all at three, winning three.

William Haggas had him spot on after a normal 176 days off the track, and picked up roughly a million rand to the winner for his owners. This is not a stakes race but a Heritage Handicap with 20+ runners careering down the straight mile.



ADDEYBB has The Lincoln under control.

"The Lincoln" was The Lincolnshire Handicap run at Lincoln 1849-1964 until Lincoln closed. Then, with "shire" dropped from the name, the race crossed the border into Yorkshire.

Traditionally teamed with the Grand National as the "Spring Double", the Lincoln was part of "flutters" in many households and offices. Until the 60s, this would be done by filling in a coupon and posting it before the race, bringing double meaning to ante-post betting. Now the Grand National alone occupies that sort of status.

In the race before The Lincoln - the Listed Doncaster Mile – a fascinating horse triumphed. His yellow colours are those of Sheikh Mohammed Obaid al Maktoum, the chap who took all his horses away from Luca Cumani not so long ago and entrusted them to Roger Varian, top class successor to Michael Jarvis. A recent purchase by Sheikh Obaid was Markus Jooste's and China Horse Club's WILLIE JOHN (Turf Talk 12th February).

ZABEEL PRINCE is a 5 year old who has raced only six times including on Saturday. By LOPE DE VEGA and bred in County Limerick by our breakfast companions for every Newmarket sale Bobby and

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Zabeel Prince takes the Doncaster Mile in the Soft.

DAVID ALLAN (...cont)

Honora Donworth, this is a very smart horse to watch.

In his case – off for 157 days - his class got him through the ground. In the hope that all the interruptions are a thing of the past, he should give much joy to follow.

Why “Zabeel” ? I haven’t worked out. Felix Lope de Vega wrote poetry and prose either side of the year 1600 in Madrid. The possibilities are endless. But if it were me, I might focus on the real identity of Zorro, Don Diego de la Vega and the wonderful Welsh and Spanish actors in “The Mask of Zorro”. **—tt**



Studying the form on a summer evening.

The David Allan column breaks over Easter, resuming on Monday, 16 April.

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Stallion Day at Highlands

HIGHLANDS Stud, part of Ridgemont will host a stallion day on 25 May 2018 at 6pm. The day will introduce guests to some very exciting additions to their existing band of star stallions.

Highlight on the night is Highlands Stud’s exciting new sire Canford Cliffs, a five time G1 winner, whose notable progeny include recent G2 Alister Clark Stakes winner Cliff’s Edge and G3 Three Troikas Stakes vixen Fish River. Canford Cliffs will be making his South African debut at the stallion show.

Among the new and or young sires set to be shown are such G1 winners as Moutonshoek’s Admiral Kitten, star sprinter Rafeef, and Cape Guineas winner William Longsword. The latter will be joined at the show by his stable mate Coup De Grace—the only son of thrice champion US sire Tapit at stud in South Africa.

Quasillo, a Sea The Stars close relative to prominent sire Querari, is another exciting young sire set to be shown at Highlands, while the Wilgerbosdrift based pair of Flower Alley and Soft Falling Rain (Bred by Highlands) are other popular stallions to appear.

Highlands Stud’s outstanding resident sire Dynasty is sure to be one of the star attractions on the night, with other well known sires Jackson, Oratorio, Querari, Vercingetorix and Visionaire also set to be shown on the night.

For more information, or to reserve a place at Highlands/Ridgemont, interested parties can contact Amanda Carey on (082) 465 4020.—*Cape Breeders.*