



## Mondays with David Allan



# The feeding of the Five Thousand



*The sales arena at Cape Premier Yearling Sale.*

**WELL, not quite. And certainly there are no signs of loaves or fishes. But the scale and generosity of catering involved in most South African bloodstock sales is nothing short of astonishing in its quality (often high) and price (often nil).**

The focus now is on the CTS Premier Yearling Sale in its extraordinary venue at CTICC in central Cape Town. Soon, articles and social media posts will dissect the sale itself. This is not one such article, although if the directors, managers, auctioneers, staff and sub-contractors of CTS found themselves having to "Keep Calm and Carry On" following recent events, they achieved that and more in a manner that was probably exhausting for many of them, but impressive to the attending population.

For the very first Cape Premier Yearling Sale, I was asked to bring overseas people (with generous assistance from the sales company) who were players in the game of good reputation and would, all going well, give "good press" to the event afterwards. We threw ourselves wholeheartedly into a published AllanBloodlines programme of our own events dovetailing with the generous hosts' schedule which, in those days, started with the super Klawervlei super Pre-Met bash under **(to page 2)**

South Africa's  
Innovative  
Thoroughbred  
Sales Company



*Cape Thoroughbred Sales*





*Goffs Sale Ring in Ireland - the food and drink are somewhere else.*

### **DAVID ALLAN (cont fm page 1)**

the mountains at Stellenbosch and ended a week later - immediately after the sale – with The Met.

If the comments of many back home in UK or Ireland registered the non-stop partying, they were not meant unkindly. On the contrary, they were appreciating tremendous hospitality. But the implication in the comment was "How on earth do they do it?"

It is not only a CTS trait. We couldn't help feeling at first sight, years ago, that shifting yearlings into Johannesburg two weeks before a sale was not only because of the long trip. After all, it takes 18 hours or so for the Irish bred yearlings comprising 60-70% of those that sell in England (and foals, and breeding stock) to travel over. They arrive a couple of days before inspections in a continuous flow which can, one must admit, get a bit hectic.

At Germiston, there was something of a festival or convivial atmosphere amongst people from around a huge country joining with each other for a period of time on the sales complex and around.

At a recent Nationals, the sale started with a fairly full arena. Gone were the days of Emperors Palace

sponsored dancers and acrobats, bodies oiled and sparsely clothed, "opening the sale" with a performance in the pit of the arena. This was a proper sale commencement with some announcements and then on with the sale. Great! But some time later, the arena looked empty. The Triple Crown Restaurant had opened and was packed, serving excellent (free) food and drink. Whether exclusively for Platinum Buyers and their guests or not, I couldn't say for sure. Other outlets there, old and new, require payment.

For several years straddling the year 2,000, I and my colleagues in our hotel and leisure business which ran in parallel with bloodstock activities, held the catering contracts for Tattersalls Sales which encompassed two restaurants and other food outlets. We worked very closely with many aspects of the sales company, as with bloodstock affairs on the FBA Council.

Everything was charged and we had to work hard to keep prices reasonable because the sales company took a levy. None of the eating and drinking took place in the sales ring – in fact all comestibles were and are banned, other than maybe a take away coffee or soft bottle of water. Certainly no alcohol in the ring, although available in other places if required – at a cost.

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## DAVID ALLAN (cont..)

The great majority of those purchasing food and beverage are at the (European) sale to work continuously through inspection days and lengthy selling days when simultaneously inspecting for selling days ahead. Eating gets fitted in (and bought) as and when, give or take some private hospitality alternatives by invitation.

In contrast, free food and drink is the height of generosity. Some hardened professionals, visiting for the first time from Europe this weekend, couldn't believe that it was both good and free!

There were 75 round tables at Cape Premier Sale this time. Not all were occupied identically in both sessions. But even so, that's a lot of mouths to feed

as well as an enormous logistical exercise to allocate people to tables and publish the allocations.

The costs of selling horses in South Africa, relative to average and median prices, are very high compared to Europe. Clearly the costs falling to the sales companies are also high but some scales date back to the breeders "paying commission to themselves" i.e. to the breeder-owned sales company arm of the TBA thus funding other activities.

One of the biggest differences between nations is the lavish SA complimentary hospitality. In the new order of things at CTS, I wonder how the hospitality cookie will crumble. Mind you, I wouldn't want to be the first caterer to have to make everyone pay for a bottle of water, let alone a delicious lunch with wine. - **tt**.

## SUN MET LATEST ODDS

LEGAL EAGLE is back on top of bookmakers' boards for Saturday's Gr1 Sun Met over 200m at Kenilworth. Marinaresco has drifted a notch to 5-1, Last Winter to 7s, the rest unchanged.

Betting World's latest betting:

9-2 LEGAL EAGLE,

5-1 (9-2) Marinaresco

7-1 (6-1) (11-2) Last Winter

7-1 (17-2) Oh Susanna

9-1 Copper Force, African Night Sky

12-1 Cascapedia

12-1 (14-1) Captain America

16-1 Gold Standard

22-1 Heavenly Blue, Horizon

25-1 and better others.

25-1 Sail South, Nother Russia

OF COURSE, YES, WE'RE ON TWITTER!

[@turftalk1](https://twitter.com/turftalk1)

## Highest donation offer wins this print



*FOLLOWING our News Bit on retired superstar Jockey Steve Cauthen last week, trainer Dorrie Sham has made this **Limited Edition Print of Cauthen's English Classic winners** available to the highest bidder. It's a framed, 80 x 80cm collector's piece signed by the painter and is presently up on the wall at the East Cape Horse Care Unit who is always in dire need of funds. The highest donation will go to the ECHCU; the collector can take ownership of the print or even leave it hanging at ECHCU. Turf Talk will start the bidding by adding R750 to whatever the highest bid will be. Mail your bids to [editor@turftalk.co.za](mailto:editor@turftalk.co.za). Start your year in a generous way, generosity always flows back to the giver! - **tt***

**QUALITY ENTRIES ON RANDJESFONTEIN Horses In Training Sale SCHEDULED FOR the 9th of FEBRUARY.** For details, call Joanne 083 399 6353. For the list of entries, [click here](#).