



Show of Strength

South Africa ushers in post-Jooste era with a united show of strength

James Thomas reflects on last week's National Yearling Sale in Johannesburg

Life in the South African bloodstock industry has seldom seemed plain sailing in recent times. Not only is the country effectively landlocked by strict quarantine procedures, limiting its presence on the world stage, but there has also been a period of instability created by infighting among significant industry figures.

Among those figures is Markus Jooste, the man who had seemed hell-bent on total domination of the South African racing and bloodstock industry, having been the country's perennial leading owner, a director in a major sales house – where he was also a leading buyer – as well as being a key stakeholder in one of nation's biggest stud farms.

So when the business tycoon's ship sank amid a litany of accountancy fraud allegations in the Steinhoff case, the South African bloodstock community was left rocking in his wake.

However, after a buoyant renewal of the Bloodstock South Africa (BSA) National Yearling Sale in Johannesburg, some believe his departure from the industry has set in motion a chain of events that has already seen the light at the end of the tunnel burn that bit brighter.

As a former director of rival auction house Cape Thoroughbred Sales (CTS), Jooste had not been a member of the buying bench at the National Yearling

Sale for some five years.

Nevertheless, many had expected the Mayfair Speculators man to have an impact on trade during the 2018 renewal, as it was feared that purchasers would have already spent their annual budget on buying up the many Jooste-owned horses in training that he has been forced to sell in an attempt to repay almost SAR1.6 billion (£150,708,450/€173,425,700) owed to his creditors.

However, the sale surpassed all expectations, with the inaugural selection session proving a particular hit with buyers and sellers alike, with 171 yearlings fetching an aggregate of SAR99,555,000 (£5,773,860/€6,636,345).

"Big buyers have disappeared out of the industry before and the industry has continued, but I'm still very surprised at the strength of trade," said the sale's leading buyer, Jehan Malherbe of Form Bloodstock. "I thought selling so many horses on the eve of the sale would have had an impact but it doesn't seem to have."

Malherbe's sentiments were echoed by leading trainer Mike de Kock, who said: "There seems to be a lot more people coming out and buying horses now. When you have one player dominating the industry it isn't healthy as people start thinking 'what chance have we got taking on the big guy?'"

“That dominance from one man is not healthy. But the game has been here before all of us and it will be here after all of us.”

Among those on a diverse buying bench was a former colleague of Jooste, CTS chairman Chris van Niekerk, whose Rainbow Beach Trading signed for three at a total spend of SAR1.315 million (£76,240/€87,640). Rainbow Beach Trading had not made a National Yearling Sale purchase since 2013, which is also the year Jooste's Mayfair Speculators last bought at the Johannesburg auction.

Significantly, those three lots acquired by van Niekerk were sourced from the drafts of Varsfontein and Moutonshoek, operations who are among a group of breeders that have been notable absentees from CTS's sales for a number of years.

The exact reasons this group of prominent South African breeders have opted not to sell at CTS sales in recent years remains unclear, but with suggestions of deep-running tensions being covered in Jooste's fingerprints, many felt that van Niekerk's actions should be taken as an olive branch.

“Chris van Niekerk buying here is a positive step and should have been gratefully received by everybody,” said Malherbe. “Our industry is so small that we can't afford to have divisions - we've all got to row the same boat.”

“I hope all the politics is behind us - it feels like everyone's looking to the future.”

Among those looking firmly to the future was Jessica Slack of leading National Sale vendor Mauritzfontein. “I think the industry is far more positive than it was 12 months ago,” she said enthusiastically. “Even two weeks ago I think people were feeling unsure. But there's been a great feel to this week - the sale has definitely felt like a turning point in terms of people's optimism.”

Not only does it look as if the shadow that Jooste's involvement cast over the industry is beginning to fade, but there also seems to be a growing optimism with regards the reframing of the quarantine procedures horses currently face when being exported from the country.

Despite the nature of the current protocols, plenty at the National Sale were taking the presence of overseas buyers, most notably the Hong Kong Jockey Club, as a sign that change is on the way. “I can't say enough about how important it is having the Hong Kong Jockey Club here,” said De Kock, who added that the support of such major global

players could be read as well-earned validation of the country's racing and breeding scene.

“Also having guys from places like China and Singapore is great, and if we can get our movement [of horses] right, I think that will only get stronger.”

“It means a hell of a lot to a very small country like ours to have these big players here. The fact we're being supported by the likes of Sheikh Hamdan and the Hong Kong Jockey Club, it's a massive plus for South African racing that they have a positive view of it.”

Positive atmosphere

While buyers and sellers alike were heartened by the strength of trade, with turnover during the three days up 25 per cent year-on-year to SAR140,240,000 (£8,125,505/€9,346,295), perhaps the most poignant aspect was the sense of bonhomie among all who participated, something that had been missing from the wider South African industry for some time.

“The overwhelming comments I have heard revolve around the tremendous vibe and positive atmosphere enjoyed at the sale,” said Bloodstock South Africa's Gary Grant. “The sale's success can also be viewed as a comment on the fair and free trade practiced at BSA auctions.”

Slack was also among many that reflected positively on the sale, and said: “This sale has had an especially good feel. I was expecting prices to be down but I think they've been amazing. Hopefully the breeders that were worried about what trade would be like here will have been given more faith going forward.”

No one can be certain what the next chapter holds for the South African industry, but if the evidence provided at the National Yearling Sale is anything to go by there should be plenty to look forward to.





Champions Day blockbuster!

Robert Garner

Get ready for it...

Champions Day at Turffontein on Saturday 5 May is set to be a blockbuster as usual with no fewer than nine feature races on a day modelled on the famous Breeders' Cup extravaganza in the USA.

Breeders' Cup gave horseracing in America a much-needed and enormous boost when it was launched back in 1984. The aim was to create a year-end championship day with the meeting comprising a series of championship races for different age groups and sexes headlined by the now-legendary Breeders' Cup Classic.

The inaugural Breeders' Cup at the now defunct Hollywood Park Racecourse in Los Angeles comprised seven feature races and \$10 million in prize money - a novel concept in those years when one or two feature events at a race meeting were the norm.

Horseracing in Gauteng was in the doldrums with no mega horseracing events when Phumelela took over the reins towards the end of the 1990s and steps were immediately taken to remedy the problem.

The Summer Cup which had disappeared from the calendar was re-introduced in its original format and simultaneously a Triple Crown for three-year-olds was introduced with each of the three legs of the series to form the headline event at a major race meeting.

The third addition to the calendar was Champions Day, which aimed to be South Africa's equivalent to the Breeders' Cup with nine feature events on what was then Africa's richest raceday. The feature races included the SA Derby, the third and final leg of the Triple Crown.

Creating Champions Day required major surgery to the programme. The old concept of no more than a couple of big races on a day was chucked out the window with a range of feature races plucked from individual days to form the biggest feature-race extravaganza the country had ever seen.

The concept, which was later applied to form a

series of month-end mega race meetings through the season, proved a winner from the outset and for many horseracing purists Champions Day remains their favourite day of the year.

This year's meeting boasts an awesome line-up, ranging from the headline R4-million Premier's Champions Challenge for older horses to the R2-million SA Derby and the R1-million Computaform Sprint, the championship race for sprinters.

Other events include the championship races for two-year-olds in the SA Nursery and the SA Fillies Nursery.

It's one of the "Big 4" on the horseracing calendar so make a date to be there!

You can count on an afternoon of the best racing action the sport has to offer and the Intercontinental Village will provide lots of between-races entertainment.

The highlight of the extravaganza will be the clash between reigning Horse of the Year Legal Eagle and top mare Nother Russia in the day's topline, the Premier's Champions Challenge.

The two clashed in the 1600m Horse Chestnut Stakes last month, when Legal Eagle was all out to ward off Nother Russia by a neck as he pushed his career earnings above R11 million.

There's 400m further to travel on Saturday and some experts reckon Nother Russia will have her revenge over the longer distance. But Legal Eagle is a champion and it's set to be a terrific battle!

Another highlight will be Takingthepeace's bid to become only the third filly to win the Wilgerbosdrift Triple Tiara for three-year-old fillies. The series comprises the 1600m Gauteng Fillies Guineas, the 1800m SA Fillies Classic and the 2450m SA Oaks, all sponsored by Mary Slack's Wilgerbosdrift Stud.

Takingthepeace has the first two legs in the bag and victory in Saturday's Oaks will earn her a R1-million bonus and a place in the history books.

The Computaform Sprint over 1000m, Africa's greatest test of speed, is also set to be a cracker.

RACING WORLD

Phumelela Gaming & Leisure Limited, together with its partners Kiron Interactive and GBI Racing, recently launched a new satellite channel that broadcasts live local and international horseracing to betting shops throughout Africa.

The fixed-odds betting channel, named Racing World, offers players betting opportunities on British and Irish racing (both flat and jumps), South African racing as well as Kiron's virtual racing products.

Betting on the channel is supplied through a white label service (using the Press Association feed integrated with each operator's proprietary or third-party betting platform) and via a dedicated race-book solution (supplied in collaboration with a UK-based bet platform provider, A Bet A).

This innovative channel will expose bettors across Africa to prestigious flat races around the world, including the Epsom and Irish Derbies, Glorious Goodwood and York's Juddmonte International fixtures, as well as premier jumps racing festivals from Cheltenham, Punchestown and the iconic Grand National from Aintree.

John Stuart, International Sales Director for Phumelela Gaming and Leisure Limited, said:

"This is a step forward for horseracing betting in Africa. Enhancing the racing package that we offer our African clients with Kiron Interactive and GBI is a priority for us."

Nick Mills, Commercial Director of GBI Racing said:

"GBI is widely regarded as the best in the world and its unique history, levels of integrity and range of products make it a compelling offering for the wagering audience. We are committed to showcasing and growing the reach and appeal of British and Irish racing, so Africa is a very exciting market for GBI Racing."

Steven Spartinos, CEO of Kiron Interactive, said:

"We are always assessing new opportunities to expand our global reach, and this partnership with two of the most highly respected and recognisable firms in the racing industry, GBI Racing and Phumelela, represents a major milestone for us."



Medics

Phumelela well equipped to deal with riders' injuries

Phumelela Gaming has belayed concerns about medical services at its racing venues after certain issues were brought to the attention of the company's racing management following unfortunate injuries sustained in falls to jockeys Anthony Delpach and Gavin Lerena.

Phumelela would like to clarify any misconceptions that may currently exist and is committed to the health and safety of all participants in horseracing events at all of its facilities.

"Our Chief Medical Officer (CMO) is responsible for overseeing medical operating procedures and has close to 30 years direct experience as a medical doctor in the sport. The CMO is supported by a track-based medical team consisting of a Race Medical Doctor, Advanced Life Support (ALS) paramedics, registered nurses, and an event ambulance crew staffed up to Intermediate Life Support (ILS) level. In addition, all horse racing events are externally supported by Netcare 911 emergency medical services to provide transportation from the arena medical centre to pre-determined trauma facilities, including Netcare Milpark Hospital which is a Level 1 accredited trauma centre.

"Contrary to what has been reported in certain publications, Phumelela continuously maintains and updates its medical operating procedures specifically according to the different racing events held around the country. In general, these operating procedures provide for an ALS First Responder, a marked ILS event ambulance and a veterinarian vehicle to follow the field of horses. In the event of a rider coming off a horse, it is required that the event ambulance continues to follow the field while the First Responder, who as previously stated is well equipped, attends to the fallen jockey.

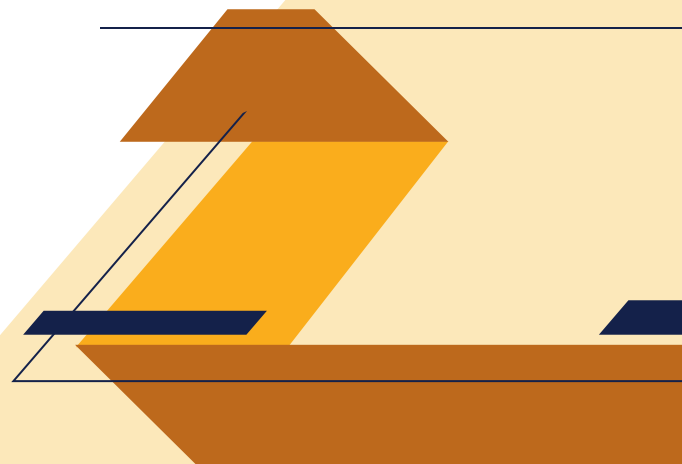
"This allows for preliminary treatment to be initiated while the event ambulance returns to the site of the fall. The event ambulance is then utilised to remove an injured jockey to the track-based medical facility where the patient can be fully examined by the designated Race Medical Doctor. In the event that an injured jockey needs to be transferred to a hospital,

an external emergency medical service provider is utilised with preference being given to Netcare 911. The medical operating procedures further provide for airlifting of critical injury cases by helicopter directly from the track.



"Phumelela Gaming would like to reassure race participants, their families and spectators that the necessary measures are in place to provide for the medical treatment and care of injured jockeys. Races are further monitored by CCTV in order to ensure the soonest possible detection of an incident, which is then reported to the medical teams via radio. Following the recent injuries to Gavin Lerena and Anthony Delpach, additional steps have now been introduced to ensure the proper identification of all medical resources active on the track, including First Responders.

"We wish the injured riders well in their recovery and thank those involved for raising their concerns with Phumelela."



Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No,

it's a drone!

A drone added a new dimension to watching horseracing on TV on Classic Day at Turffontein on Saturday 7 April, when viewers were treated to a dramatic bird's-eye view of the action. Think of it as National Geographic and the spectacular action of a race rolled into one.

Tellytrack has entered into a partnership with UAV Industries, a company that specialises in the safe and legal operation of drones in Africa. UAV Industries have vast experience in both aviation and technology. Tellytrack initially investigated the use of drones three years back before legislation came into play. At that stage drones could be operated at will.

Tellytrack invested in a drone and flew it during a few big racedays at the time. This was a pilot phase and thus not many visuals were seen on air. But soon after legislation was passed which grounded the craft and pretty much mothballed the project until this year. With legislation in Tellytrack's favour and after talks with UAV, more tests were carried out and technical issues resolved. A limitation of the device is that it can be affected by strong winds as was experienced at the Sun Met at Kenilworth at the end of January. Then onto Turffontein racecourse where it was decided Classic Day would be D-day for use of the drone. Buy-in first had to be obtained from the

National Horseracing Authority (NHRA) and jockeys to be able to fly on the big day.

Safety was paramount and other issues like altitude, noise and positioning of the craft had to be resolved. Parameters were set - the craft would be no lower than 21 meters and never directly above or in front of horses and riders.

Everything went off as planned on Classic day with stunning visuals coming through at the start of selected races and it was amazing to see how well horses maintained their positions and riders their balance at high speed.

Tellytrack Operations Manager Wesley Lloyd said, "TellyTrack is always looking at ways of improving its broadcasts, and drones are seen as cutting-edge tech used within a live environment. Our aim is to provide the viewer with multiple angles and the best viewer experience possible. We will be using live drone footage to cover the start of races and to show an aerial shot of jostling for positions after the start.

The finish of the race will be recorded and played back as an aesthetic enhancement to broadcasts." Drone coverage of races is the latest move by Tellytrack and Phumelela to enhance the customer experience and give them maximum bang for their buck. There's more to come...watch this space!



Betting is open & the fight is on!

TAB now offers two great bets for fight fans . . . Fight 1 and Fight 5... and it's only R5 to play.

Fight 1 will generally be offered on the headline event on the card, while Fight 5 comprises 5 bouts and players must correctly predict the outcome of all 5 fights to win.

There are five result options in each bout: a draw; Fighter A to win on points; Fighter A to win any other way; Fighter B to win on points; Fighter B to win any other way.

Fight betting brings a new level of enjoyment to TAB sports punters as, unlike soccer and rugby pools, it does not involve watching multiple long matches and channel hopping between concurrent games or sometimes waiting overnight to know if you've won. With Fight 5 you can get to play a multi-leg bet on one boxing or fighting event, and watch the five bouts happen one after the other in less time than it takes to watch a T20 cricket match.

TAB's first fight pools were operated on 5 April. The pools comprised bouts at Fight 5-sponsored The Night Of Legends Professional Boxing Tournament, held at the impressive Time Square Arena in Menlyn, Pretoria.



The night was headlined by a bout for the vacant WBF Lightweight title, featuring South Africa's unbeaten hope Xolisani "Nomeva" Ndongeni, who successfully won his first world title on points after a gruelling 12-rounder.

The launch tournament was broadcast live into all TAB and Betting World outlets and could be watched via streaming through www.tellytrack.com with existing subscribers getting it for free, and day memberships offered for just R24.95.

TAB fight betting is here and could prove a great addition to the TAB betting bouquet. All bets are available through tabonline.co.za or over the counter at your nearest TAB outlet.

Box with TAB and make the punches count . . .Fight 1 and Fight 5

Fight 5 – HOW TO PLAY

Fight 5 is a great bet that makes it even more exciting when your fighter lands the knockout blow

Each Fight 5 pool comprises 5 fights. One fighter is shown as Fighter A, the other as Fighter B.


You must correctly predict the results of all 5 fights to win. There are 5 result options in each bout:

- Fighter A to win on points - that's number ONE when you bet
- Fighter A to win any other way except points - number TWO when you bet
- A draw - number THREE when you bet
- Fighter B to win on points - number FOUR when you bet
- Fighter B to win any other way - number FIVE when you bet

In TAB stores, call your bet to a teller. Online players must mark their choices in the provided matrix. Always use numbers one to five to indicate your choices in each fight.

The unit of betting for both fight bets is R5 and multiple or permutation betting is available.

You can play Fight 5 on your mobile. Go to tabonline.co.za and open a TAB account - it's so easy. Or head to your nearest TAB.



Fight 1 – HOW TO PLAY

- Fight 1 is identical to Fight 5 except there is only one fight. The bet is normally offered on the headline event at the tournament.

There's TAB boxing action available every weekend. Keep a lookout for the pools and make the punches count with Fight 1 and Fight 5.



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Phumelela gets loud in colour

Staff and community members made their way to the Cansa Shavathon held at Turffontein Racecourse on Thursday and Friday 1 and 2 March 2018 to show their support by donating R50 for a head shave or colour spray.



Let's talk shop

In late 2017 it was identified that, as an industry, horseracing and betting lacked sufficient internal communication and transparency. And so "In The Know" was born – an industry news and communication platform for stakeholders, staff and members to stay informed and well, in the know.

Today's digital world has revolutionised our access to knowledge and information and with over 1,24 billion websites all over the world, the information age has given the 4 billion internet users an array of sources to choose from — In The Know aims to provide a reliable narrative and give a transparent voice to the betting industry as a whole and start to unpack the inner workings of our business; our sport; our hobby; our passion.

What began as a quarterly newsletter and magazine show has now, in its third edition, evolved into a monthly newsletter and bi-monthly magazine show, which will bring to life the best of the months' stories. Not only will the monthly publication discuss industry topics, topical overviews and industry developments, but will communicate big ideas and strategic initiatives from industry influencers. The publication will tell some of the positive stories but, in the main, hopes to bring to light the often-untold truth and inner workings within the business of horseracing and betting.

The publication is geared towards people who want to know more about who is who, what is new and what's true within the horseracing and betting world. It will provide the most current information surrounding events and opportunities that relate to our business. The newsletter will be sent to your inbox each month and made available on partner industry websites. The quarterly television show will be broadcast on Tellytrack as advertised or can be streamed on Tellytrack.com. In The Know invites you to submit your stories and comments to intheknow@tellytrack.com.



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WINS R50,000!
20 APRIL

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