

Aintree Oversubscribed...

The 2014 winner Pineau De Re is in danger of missing the cut for Saturday's Grand National at Aintree. Nine withdrawals have left 87 entries remaining for the £1m race, with a maximum of 40 horses allowed to run. While 2015 runner-up Saint Are is now guaranteed a run, Pineau De Re's trainer Dr Richard Newland needs at least three defections before Thursday's deadline.

Turffontein Undersubscribed

Only seven horses were entered for the R1-million Gr1 Empress Club Stakes to be run over 1600m at Turffontein on Saturday 16 April. The cutoff for the two feature races on Empress Club Stakes Day – the other is the 2450m Listed Spook Express Handicap, which attracted 10 nominations, was extended by the National Racing Bureau. Where are the horses?

MICK UPDATE

Summerhill supremo Mick Goss was discharged from hospital late last week after being admitted again on Easter Sunday. The word from the farm is that he is happy to be back at home and has been overwhelmed by the interest and support from across the world. We wish Mick and Cheryl well.

Not His Best

UK trainer Jim Best has been banned from racing for four years with immediate effect after being found guilty of ordering conditional jockey Paul John to stop two horses from running on their merits. Best was found to be a "dishonest individual who corrupted a young man" by the disciplinary panel, while the BHA slammed the trainer, branding his behaviour "reprehensible and an abuse of the privilege of holding a licence to train racehorses".



No Fear

Fear Not, fifth in the Klawervlei Majorca and the Vasco Prix Du Cap, has had a throat operation. Adam Marcus said: "She was showing signs of having an entrapped epiglottis which means she could choke up in her races. There are some suitable features for her at Kenilworth over the next few months so I won't be taking her to Durban. On her day she is only just off the best although she does need things to go her way," he told Michael Clower.

A Look In The Mirror

A BHA report has highlighted a number of eye-opening findings, including the suggestion the body lacks the expertise to properly judge the merits of a given ride, an acknowledgement of a feeling of 'them and us' between the sport's participants and the BHA, and an acceptance of pettiness within the disciplinary process. How does the NHA feel?



ANTI-SOCIAL MEDIA



"If you're not patting us on the back then don't go on social media" seems to be the overriding attitude of those running racing. Please turn up day in, day out and part with your hard-earned cash but don't have an opinion on track condition unless it is full of praise. We want you to spend your spare time engaging with our media assets and improving our balance sheet but don't question how we run things as that isn't good for the image of racing....This comes from an Australian publication. Sound familiar?

Mixed Emotions

It was with a heavy heart that Tommy Berry rode at Sha Tin on the second anniversary of his twin brother Nathan's death on Sunday but the consummate professional still came away with a win on John Moore-trained sprinter Bad Boy. Nathan Berry died in Sydney on April 3, 2014 after a short battle with illness and Tommy admitted his thoughts were with his tight-knit family back home.

Talking Bull

Bush Hill's value for money stallion Treador has produced 10 winners and 24 places from his runners since 1 March. He also sired another Gr3 winner when Bull Valley won on Classic Day. He will be represented at the upcoming National Yearling Sale by seven progeny, two of them half-siblings each to Equus Horse Of The Year, Irish Flame and the stakes winner Bezanova.

July Entries

A reminder to owners and trainers that entries for the R3,5 million Gr1 Vodacom Durban July to be run at Greyville (on turf!) on Saturday 2 July close at 11h00 on Wednesday 13 April. Entries must be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of R2280 for each horse entered. How time flies!