

2016 The Year That Was

Mumm's The Word

J&B missed an opportunity by jumping ship after 39 years of sponsorship for the Met. But one man's loss is another man's gain, as Sun International showed by securing the sponsorship for 2017 and beyond.



... and they're off! The launch of the new 2017 Sun Met showed much promise.

The last Saturday in January will be an event of note, with the Sun Met now worth R5 million. Also featured are three Million Rand Gr1 races (Cape Flying Championship, Majorca Stakes, and Investec Derby), two \$500,000 sale-races for 3yo's, and a R1 million sale race for 2yo's. Total stakes for the day are R10 million plus \$1 million – SA's richest raceday, ever.

The Sun Met is co-sponsored by Mum, the world's leading champagne.

Queen for a Day

The year kicked off on 9 January with the sumptuousness that is the L'Ormarins Queen's Plate. Legal Eagle made easy work of the day's main feature, with additional highlights including a triumphant return to the Cape for Alec Laird with super filly, Smart Call winning the Gr1 Paddock Stakes.

Day of Dreams

23 January saw the inaugural CTS Day of Dreams, which also hosted the freshly moved Cape Derby and Majorca Stakes. The Majorca Stakes was won for the second time by Inara and despite a sea of the green and gold in the parade ring, the inaugural CTS Million Dollar delivered a fairytale when Glen Puller Racing, the only 'small' yard granted a starting booth, appeared out of nowhere with Illuminator to grab the prize, last minute jockey change and all!

Degrading

January brought news that all of the Golden Horseshoe, Golden Slipper SA Oaks and Gold Cup were being downgraded to Gr2's. The reason? The Asian Pattern Committee, who have in fact deemed SA' number of Gr1's 'excessive', have recommended that we cut this down to no more than 25 across the board.

Bold Move

Horse of the Year Legal Eagle may have been the main man on the track, but he was firmly put into his place by Smart Call in the J&B Met. The official handicapper rated the filly MR 121 and Legal Eagle 120 on their efforts in that race.



Following her sensational J&B Met win, Smart Call was sent to England to be prepared for a tilt at a Breeder's Cup race in California in November. A bold move by owner Jessica Slack and trainer Alec Laird, which was sadly scuppered by Smart Call going lame.

They're trying again in 2017 | *W Marks*

The Upper Hand

Mayfair Speculators set a new SA yearling record when bidding to R6 million at the CTS Cape Premier Yearling Sale in January for a Silvano colt bred by Drakenstein Stud.

The youngster's dam National Banker is a Gr3 winner by Fort Wood, out of a full sister to champion Arabian Lass. Internationally, Mayfair was active as well, notably with buying yearlings in partnership with Coolmore Stud in Ireland.

Bombay Duck

If ever there was Opulence and Excess, it was at the 36th Asian Racing Conference held in January in Mumbai, attended by 650 delegates from all over the racing world. India's best from Bollywood entertained and made all the waiters swoon.



Caught on camera by China delegate Wen Li: Karel Miedema shows the finer points of how horses gallop, to the amusement of moderator Bill Nader, IFHA's Brian Kavanagh, and (obscured) Timeform's Simon Rowlands and Hong Kong's senior handicapper Nigel Gray. On the right, Bangalore Turf Club's chief handicapper Mr B Shivaprasad is having a rest.

There were work sessions, too: fifty speakers took the stage, including two from South African. Summerhill's Mick Goss made the case for simplifying export protocols, Sporting Post's Karel Miedema explained to the world why and how handicapping works.

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NHA Rule 62.2

When jockey's mess with the NHA's Rule 62.2 (and in particular sections 1/2/3), racing's reputation suffers big time – as do punters, if flurries of media activity is to be taken seriously.

For reference, here is the part of the Rule which deals with not riding horses out in the way jockeys are supposed to.

62.2 The RIDER of a HORSE shall:-

62.2.1 take all reasonable and permissible measures throughout a RACE to ensure that his HORSE is given a full opportunity to win or to obtain the best possible placing;

62.2.2 ride his HORSE in a competent and professional manner;

62.2.3 ride his HORSE out to the end of a RACE to the satisfaction of the STIPENDIARY STEWARDS; [Amended 24.10.2016]

Interesting is the amendment made to 62.2.3, which is dated 24 October and introduces an element of discretion.

During 2016, less than ten jockeys fell foul of the Rule, with punishments varying from a fine of R2500 to lengthy suspensions.

The worst offenders were Khumalo and Penny, who both showed up twice in NHA press releases.

Khumalo got 2 weeks for an infringement of 62.2.3 at the Vaal in March, on Dagoon. That was followed by breaking 62.2.1 on Captain Courteous at Fairview in June. The NHA took its time with an investigation into that very obvious offense (Khumalo, who was on his way to become champion jockey in July, had pleaded guilty), and finally settled on a 60 days suspension.

Penny got ten days for a ride at Flamingo Park in April under 62.2.3 (he pleaded guilty), and then a hefty 45 days for infringing the same Rule at the Vaal in September, despite a not-guilty plea.

Super Sad Saturday

South African horseracing experienced one of its darkest moments of 2016 when the Stipendiary Stewards upheld a frivolous objection at Turffontein on 3 September.

The Ormond Ferraris trained Querari Viking was a convincing winner beating

the Mike Azzie-trained first-timer Nordic Storm by 1,10 lengths. After reviewing the start and the race itself, jockey Karl Zechner lodged an objection which was bizarrely upheld.

Messrs Thulani Khanyile and Gareth Timm were subsequently charged with and found guilty of contraventions of the NHA Disciplinary Employment Code. After considering the impact that the objection decision had on the reputation of the NHA and the Industry at large, both officials were demoted.

Many questions remain unanswered.

Such A Scandal

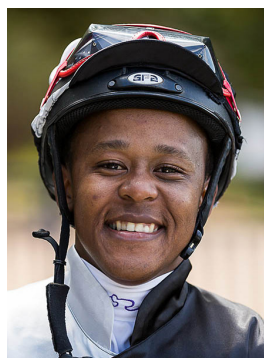


Scandal wins at Fairview

The Fairview and South African 1000m record was broken twice in 2016. The Muhtafal filly Scandal bolted home on 2 December to win the Glendore Sprint. The turf track record was shattered just ten months earlier by Blizzard Belle, who set 54,55 secs.

Northern Light!

Winning Form – sponsored jockey Muzi Yeni was crowned Northern Cape champion jockey for the fourth consecutive season in August. Consistently the busiest jockey in the country, he rode in 4861 races nationally over those four seasons.



Muzi Yeni

One And Only

Tellytrack CEO Rob Scott announced that the racing channel would only be utilising one presenter on course with effect from 1 October. The decision was met with mixed response. It is difficult to assess the upside – other than a saving on the expenses budget. But then they have employed Dominic Zaki and Neil Andrews in two newly created posts. There has been no discernible improvement in their product.

Global View

The announcement that the International Thoroughbred Breeders Federation Congress is coming to South Africa was seen as a major boon to promoting our prospects on the world stage. The event is taking place on 8 and 9 January 2017. The two day open veterinary forum boasts an international line-up of speakers.

Golden Moves

In March Gold Circle announced the appointment of Raf Sheik as Racing Executive to take over from Graeme Hawkins, who was made Marketing Executive. Sheik's position as head of the National Racing Bureau was taken over by Aven Sewpersad.



Gold Circle's Raf Sheik

Stakes Cakes

Gr1 or no, April brought news that the Premier's Champions Challenge (formerly known as the President's Champions Challenge) would be the country's richest open thoroughbred race, scheduled for 30 April (Champions Day) over 2000m at Turffontein. The race, previously run for R2 million has been increased to R4 million, pushing total stakes on Champions day up to R10million. Hot on the heels of

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this announcement comes news that the Vodacom Durban July is increased to R4.25 million for 2016. New sponsor Sun International trumps the lot, hoiking the Met stake to a whopping R5 million. Of course, sadly all of these pale in comparison to the CTS Million Dollar sales races, to be run on Met day 2017.

N.H. HEY?

With the sudden departure of Denzil Pillay, Colin Hall went from zero to hero, plucked from relative administrative obscurity to occasionally 'acting' CEO (job titles are so tricky). But it was a case of now you see him, now you don't as after 30 odd years of keeping his seat warm, he vanished into racing's Bermuda Triangle- perhaps he might find the elusive Stakes Agreement while he's there. We saw the appointment of new man Lyndon Barends as CEO. Or is it MD? What is that man's job title anyway?



NHA's Lyndon Barends

Either way, he'd hardly got his feet under the desk before he was facing the scrapping of the Benevolent Fund, Cobalt postives, a boxing match at Turffontein, Thulani's spectacular day at Turffontein, whopping fines for Paul Peter, revised penalty schedules and a revolt from the trainers and jockeys. Yet our intrepid man still found time for NHA roadshows and monthly newsletters.

Really?

Also in our regulatory highlights came lots of new rules, including changes to racehorse retirement protocols (rule 41.7) and jocks not being allowed at licensed gambling facilities. Try and figure that one out. But the Operators weren't far behind, simply tweaking their conditions to allow

for branding to be put on saddle cloths. So it seems there are dress codes for the horses now too !

Sectional Timing

Who knows?! And what ARE those weird things being put into and taken out of saddle cloths in Phum country ? Answers on a postcard.

Evil Eyes

Leading racehorse owner Adriaan van Vuuren, whose orange-and-black silks were made famous by Triple Crown winner Abashiri, announced on Facebook after the Vodacom Durban July that he and wife Rika would be leaving the sport of horseracing. Van Vuuren wrote that he and his family had been hurt by the 'evil eyes' of the media, following his decision to run Abashiri in the Vodacom Durban July. The horse ran unplaced. They reduced their string substantially at the BSA November Mixed Sale.



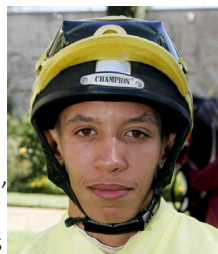
Abashiri

Jarred's Back

On 2 October Jarred Samuel makes his back to the winner's enclosure after an awful fall at Greyville on 4 December 2015.

Karl's Snarl

Triple Crown jock comes in for stick (panicked in Derby, says Mike Azzie). Is on, then off, then back on for July as connections play musical jockeys with him and Doug Whyte.



Karl Zechner

On The Move

Bernard and the Snaiths part company, Richard Fourie cuts short his HK stint to take up Snaith job, then leaves Snaiths to freelance. Bernard goes to Mauritius and then Dubai.



Richard Fourie

Delpech – Up And Down

Anthony Delpech leaves Mike de Kock and is sponsored by Wilgerbosdrift / Mauritzfontein instead. With Weichong still indisposed, Anthony cracks the nod to ride Smart Call in her UK debut, the Gr1 Sun Chariot. Unfortunately Smart Call scratches last minute and her international campaign is put on hold for the year. Anthony ends the year with a broken collar bone after falling at Turffontein.

Avontuur Coup

Astute Avontuur Stud management snap up our up and coming apprentices – Callan Murray and Lyle Hewitson as Avontuur brand ambassadors.

SA Abroad

Cold As Ice, Harry's Son, Same Jurisdiction and Smart Call campaign abroad. Mayfair Speculators win the Gr2 Prix de Royallieu on Arc weekend at Chantilly with The Juliet Rose. Jeff Lloyd comes back from a stroke to win the Brisbane championship and notch a record-breaking 7 Metro wins at the Sunshine Coast. Doug Whyte wins a second Aussie Gr1. Gavin Lerena posts 2 wins at Ascot helping the Rest of the Word team win the Shergar Cup. Defends his title at the Longines HK Jockey Challenge, but it's not to be.

Dual SA / Zim Champ apprentice (has this ever been achieved before?) Callan Murray goes on a Busman's holiday to Australia, to ride for Hall Of Fame trainer David Hayes.

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Tellytrack

At the first meeting of the new year, miscommunication from Tellytrack re a race review at Fairview causes consternation when information is not disseminated to punters. Rob Scott, Tellytrack CEO, refreshingly takes responsibility and tenders an apology. However, it's all downhill from there. Winning Ways mysteriously goes missing for two weeks and is suddenly reinstated, Molly is axed, Shaheen Shaw resigns, Alistair Cohen is drafted in to call PE racing from Rivonia as a 'new initiative' to maintain consistency for international customers', (although Bumpy still calls on-course). Julie Alexander and Neil Andrews all get promoted to managerial positions, retired trainer Dom Zaki is reinvented as TT's 'Editorial Director' and the fur flies over Fillies and Colts Guineas day coverage. However, we do like the new online channel- damn good value at under R100 per month

First Timers

Gold Circle institutes the new 'First Timer' initiative to help punters, which is more positively received in some quarters than others.

On Track

First drought then rain as well as lightning played havoc with several of our race meetings. As usual Gold Circle came under fire for the KZN tracks over the winter season, but to their credit, take steps to remedy it. However, it has prompted the formation of a new KZN Owners' Association under Brian Burnard. Durbanville receives a track make-over and there is talk of big things to come at Kenilworth as well as plans to refurbish the Milnerton training centre- although we've heard this one before.

Legalese

Horse of the Year title went to Legal Eagle, who won three Gr1 races between January and April- the Queen's Plate, Horse Chestnut Stakes and Champions Challenge. He raced in the virtually unbeatable colours of Mayfair Speculators, who got the title of Owner Of The Year for the umpteenth time.

Bye Mr Bass

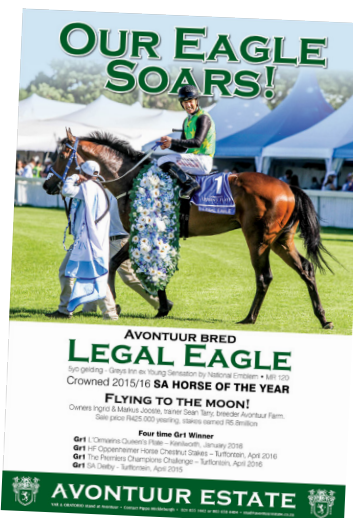
Mike Bass brings down the curtain on an illustrious career with a final Gr1 win in the Mike & Carol Bass Champions Cup at Greyville with top 3yo, Marinaresco. Mike bows out and hands over the reins to Candice.

The Sun Sets

2016 was a year of flux for the flamboyant and popular Tellytrack presenter Shaheen Shaw. In October he resigned his post with the intention of relocating to the Cape for family reasons. Just days after his resignation he suffered a heart attack. Fully recovered, he has moved to the Mother City and we will miss his famous call to 'hit 'em hard sunshines'. Hopefully this passionate disciple of punting will not be lost to the game.

Summer King

Geoff Woodruff won a staggering fourth Sansui Summer Cup in a row when Gavin Lerena steered Jet Master gelding Master Sabina to a historic double in the R2 million race at the end of November for owner Mike De Broglio. It was Woodruff's sixth success in the Gr1 and a third for Lerena.



Met Day Eight

Trainer Justin Snaith set a new South African record on J&B Met day when saddling eight of the twelve winners on the card. The Snaith Racing Team have always used the Cape's flagship day to great effect to showcase their firepower and were in top form. Four of the eight winners were ridden by Piere Strydom, two by Bernard Fayd'herbe and one apiece by S'manga Khumalo and Heavelon van der Hoven. Their biggest success of the afternoon came with Australian-bred Ovidio in the Gr2 Urban Honey Stayers.

Sad Goodbyes

Internationally we lost musical greats including George Michael, Prince, David Bowie, Leonard Cohen, Glenn Frey and Leon Russell, entertainers Andrew Sachs, Gene Wilder, Alan Rickman and Zsa Zsa Gabor. Sportspeople included Garrett Gomez, Walter Swinburn, Arnold Palmer and Muhammad Ali. On home soil we said goodbye to Moira Ellis, Cape jockey Christopher Puller, Highflyer Stud's Neill Griesel, owner / breeder / administrator Hymie Maisel, popular PE racing photographer Deon Botha, Singapore Sling owner Tiaan Thatcher and trainer, administrator and stud manager, Allen Roux. In the paddocks we lost Lammerskraal's Nacarot, Willgerbosdrift's Ilha Da Victoria, Sean Terry's stalwart Golden Apple, our only dual July winner El Picha and the Million Dollar Horse, Illuminator.



UPCOMING SALE

CAPE PREMIER YEARLING SALE

21 - 22 January 2017
Cape Town Convention Centre



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