

J&B MET 2009



London Guest was the only addition to the list of nominations for the R2,5 Million J&B Met when the first supplementary entries closed yesterday. Trained by Summerveld-based Tony

Rivalland, London Guest brings the total of KZN-based runners nominated to three along with the Herman Brown-trained Great Rhythm and last Saturday's Midmar Premier's winner

Surfin'USA trained by Mark Dixon, although Quick Millions and Littleredcorvette have been based at Glen Puller's Clairwood satellite yard for most of the current season.

Dancer's Daughter and Pocket Power are still on course for what should be a memorable rematch in the J&B Met with Dancer's Daughter running out a convincing winner of the Victress Stakes at Kenilworth and finishing a close-up third in the Paddock Stakes and Pocket Power winding up his preparation with a scintillating win in the L'Ormarins Queens Plate. The Queen's Plate/ J&B Met double is within his grasp.

The J&B Met will be run over 2000m at Kenilworth racecourse in Cape Town on Saturday January 31, 2009.



KZN BREEDERS AWARDS 2008

The National Emblem gelding Buy And Sell, bred by Bruce and Nadine le Roux's Spring Valley Stud, walked away with the Kwazulu-Natal Breeders, Horse of the Year award for the second year running at a glittering banquet. Buy And Sell's dam, the late Trade Enquiry, also repeated last year's feat of being named Broodmare of the Year.

KZN imported more stallions last season than the rest of the country combined and chairman of the KZN Breeders, Warwick Render, said that factors such as this and the record-shattering Emperor's Palace Ready To Run Sale in the face of a tough economic climate epitomized the region's soaring fortunes.

Render added that a telling sign of the regions' increased depth was that their stakes winning or placed horses were produced by 32 different individual breeders.

These horses achieved 124 stakes wins or places, 21 of which came in Grade I races. The Grade I winners among them were Buy And Sell, Wendywood, Gypsy's Warning and Outcome.

Mick and Cheryl Goss's Summerhill Stud won the Breeding Achievement Award in recognition of their fourth national champion breeders title.

A new name on the list of winners this year in the form of Yellow Star Stud, whose London News filly, Oracle News, won the Outstanding Female Sprinter award.

Yellow Star Stud is owned by Johannesburg money broker, Koos de Klerk, and his wife, Lorainne, who formerly worked for Summerhill. De Klerk owns the farm upon which Craig Ramsay's Golden Acres stud is run and Yellow Star Stud's mares stand on the same land.

Buy And Sell's second career Grade I win in the Champions Cup over 1800m at Clairwood, in which he defeated Pocket Power and Dancer's Daughter, clinched his three awards as he was also named Outstanding Middle Distance Male and Outstanding Older Male.

Buy And Sell's dam, Trade Enquiry, has produced two Grade I winners, the other being the Among Men filly Count The Money, and she currently has another promising horse-in-training, the three-year-old Fort Wood filly, Bedloe's Island, who, like Buy And Sell, is trained by Sean Tarry. Her last foal, a colt by Malhub, is now a two-year-old.

Joining Spring Valley with four awards was the Rathmor Stud of Mike and Tanya McHardy.

They won the KZN Breeder's Special Award for producing two Grade I winners in Wendywood and Gypsy's Warning. The latter garnered the Outstanding Two-year-old filly award, while the late Wendywood was named Outstanding Female Stayer and Outstanding Three-year-old Filly. Summerhill collected six awards including their Breeding Achievement Award. The others were Outstanding Male Sprinter (Rebel King), Outstanding Male Stayer (Galant Gagnant), Outstanding Three-year-old colt (Imbongi), Stallion Of The Year (Muhtafal) and Stallion Prospect (Labeeb). The Stallion Prospect award raised one or two eyebrows as Labeeb is dead, but countrywide there was a lack of precocious two-year-olds produced by first-season sires last season.

A KZN first season sire, Bezrin, was however responsible for KZN Breeders Outstanding Two-year-old colt, Thunderflash, who was bred by Jonathan and Cathy Martin.

The Outstanding Middle Distance Female and Outstanding Older Female awards were both won by the Peter Brown-bred Garden Province winner, Outcome.

The Anita Akal Industry Award honoured Des Scott, who owned the likes of July winners Illustrador and Devon Air, and currently owns the exciting three-year-old colt, Lord London. Scott Brothers bred another July winner, Politician, and Des, who has been on many racing boards in his time, was instrumental in establishing the TBA's own sales complex at Gosforth Park.

The full listing of awards are as follows:

Outstanding Two-year-old Filly -
Gypsy's Warning (Rathmor Stud)

Outstanding Two-year-old Colt -
Thunderflash (Mr & Mrs J Martin)

Outstanding Sprinter Female -
Oracle News (Yellow Star Stud)

Outstanding Sprinter Male -
Rebel King (Summerhill Stud)

Outstanding Middle Distance Female -
Outcome (P Brown)

Outstanding Middle Distance Male -
Buy And Sell (Mr & Mrs B Le Roux)

Outstanding Stayer Female -
Wendywood (Rathmor Stud)

Outstanding Stayer Male -
Galant Gagnant (Summerhill Stud)

Outstanding Three-year-old Filly -
Wendywood (Rathmor Stud)

Outstanding Three-year-old Colt -
Imbongi (Summerhill Stud)

Outstanding Older Female -
Outcome (P Brown)

Outstanding Older Male -
Buy And Sell (Mr & Mrs B Le Roux)

Broodmare Of The Year -
Trade Enquiry (Mr & Mrs B Le Roux)

Stallion Of The Year -
Muhtafal (Summerhill Stud)

Stallion Prospect Of The Year -
Labeeb (Summerhill Stud)

Breeding Achievement -
Summerhill Stud

KZN Breeder's Special Award -
Rathmor Stud

Anita Akal Industry Award -
Des Scott

Horse Of The Year -
Buy And Sell (Mr & Mrs B Le Roux)

TRAINER LAIRD CONFIRMS MELB STABLE PLAN

Leading South African trainer Charles Laird confirmed "plans to move to Australia" & "operate from Melbourne", reported The Sydney Morning Herald. Laird said he had planned to "have a satellite stable in operation for the 2008 Spring" & "we had come some way down that line & back probably at the end of June, I was informed by the Victoria Racing Club they could only guarantee me 15 stables (at Flemington). They said they would endeavour to increase that to 30 & I indicated to them that until such time that they can guarantee this number, I can't take up the offer. Tying to run a yard of what I am used to in this country (South Africa), of about 200 horses, it would be very difficult with less than 30 boxes. So I have given them an extra year until September 2009 & I asked them, please, if they can see their way round to giving me 30-35 stables, then I can make it work." Laird had "close to 20 horses in Australia awaiting his arrival & a foreman in place, but sent all but 1 galloper back to South Africa". He added: "I've got a group horse Seventh Rock (Rock Of Gibraltar-Ruby Clipper, by Rubiton) that I've given to David Hayes & he will start racing in Australia in January. He has won a Gr1 in South Africa & will be aimed at a group race in January on his way to Newmarket." Laird explained a "2-country operation could not work" noting: "my major owner Marcus Jooste was quite keen for me to try & commute between the 2 countries, but they are so far apart that's just not possible. That is why I have stressed to the VRC that we need a fair amount of horses, so that I can close up South Africa, turn my back & start at Flemington. It's a very exciting prospect. I will tell you that David Hayes basically said that he'd help me out & give me 15 boxes just to get me going, but I need commitments." Laird said Flemington will be a "stepping stone" & summed up: "I would like to set up a private farm. Being new in Australia, I wouldn't like to go over that bridge without wetting my feet at a racecourse. I would only expect to be at Flemington for about 2 years before I could purchase a property to create our own training facilities."

COETZEE SHINES AT SHA TIN TRIALS MEETING



SOUTH African jockey Felix Coetzee stole the show at Sha Tin with a masterclass in the two trials for the CathayPacific-sponsored international races on December 14.

Having outfoxed his rivals with a gem of a front-running ride aboard Egyptian Ra in the Mile Trial, he had to summon every ounce of strength to force Enthused over the line a nose in front of Sunny Power in the Sprint equivalent.

The rider is now facing a five-meeting spell on the sidelines for weighing in light last weekend. "The wins have come just in time because I need some money for my holiday!" he said.

Egyptian Ra's startling all-the-way victory produced a time only marginally outside the track record.

The Tony Cruz-trained seven-year-old came home three and three-quarter lengths clear of Sight Winner and horse of the year Good Ba Ba, who was fully ten lengths adrift in last behind a strong pace at halfway.

Turning for home, Egyptian Ra stole four lengths clear on the field and pretty soon the race was for the minor money.

"He's improving," said Cruz. "He's settling more and more each time and I believe he will be a serious contender for the Mile.

"It was a brilliant ride from Felix," added the trainer. "The time he has run was great and it puts us right there in the international class because he's doing everything right. We've done a lot of work with this horse getting him to settle."

>>The John Size-trained Enthused, who has never missed the board in 15 local starts, is firmly on course for his biggest payday yet after winning a thrilling Sprint Trial.

Lucky Quality blazed a trail as expected with Coetzee handily placed on Enthused. The race changed complexion as Sunny Power and Green Birdie darted from the pack with a furlong to race and the bob of heads went Enthused's way at the wire.

"I was exactly where I wanted to be early on," said Coetzee. "In the straight he got to the front a bit quicker than I wanted but he fought on very gamely. As we hit the line I thought I had missed the nod so I was delighted to see I had been wrong."

SA Jockey Herholdt Considers Aust Move



Top NSW country trainer Brett Cavanough "is on the hunt for a stable jockey & currently in negotiations with South African rider Francois Herholdt," reported racenet.com.au. Herholdt, 34, has ridden nearly 700 winners in South Africa, plus almost another 300 internationally in Mauritius, Dubai, Singapore, France & Macau. Cavanough commented: "From what I have seen, he's a good, strong rider that will be right at home in Australia like (recent fellow South African arrivals) Jeff Lloyd & Glyn Schofield have been. We've been having a chat to him & he's just left Mauritius for a break in South Africa & is currently discussing it with his wife & family. He'll make a decision shortly & obviously I hope he decides to come over & join us."

Eagle Mountain Wins Gr1 HK International Cup



In Hong Kong recently, Coolmore's 7-time Gr1-winning shuttler Rock Of Gibraltar (Danehill-Offshore Boom, by Be My Guest) added a Gr1 triumph when Sheikh Mohammed's UK-bred 4YO entire Eagle Mountain (Rock Of Gibraltar-Masskana, by Darshaan) scored a 1.25-lengths victory in the HK\$20 million (A\$4m) Gr1 Hong Kong International Cup (2000m on turf) at Sha Tin. Eagle Mountain (ridden by Kevin Shea for trainer Mike de Kock) defeated Irish-bred 5YO entire Balius (Mujahid-Akhla, by Nashwan) & fellow Irish-bred 6YO entire Linngari (Indian Ridge-Lidakiya, by Kahyasi). In October Eagle Mountain returned from a 12-months lay-off (after fracturing his pelvis) to break the mile track record in winning October's UK Gr3 Joel Stakes (8 furlongs) at Newmarket & 3 weeks later finished runner-up in the US Gr1 Breeders' Cup Turf (12 furlongs on turf) at Santa Anita. Last season when trained at Ballydoyle by Aidan O'Brien, Eagle Mountain won the Irish Gr2 Royal Whip Stakes (10 furlongs) at The Curragh, as well as finishing runner-up in the UK Gr1 English Derby (12 furlongs) at Epsom Downs, UK Gr1 Champion Stakes (10 furlongs) at Newmarket & UK Gr2 York Stakes (10 furlongs) at York, plus 3rd in the Gr1 Irish Derby (12 furlongs) at The Curragh. And as a juvenile in 2006, he won Ireland's Gr2 Beresford Stakes (8 furlongs) by 7-lengths at The Curragh, as well as finishing runner-up in both Ireland's Gr2 Futurity Stakes (7 furlongs) at The Curragh & UK Gr2 Champagne Stakes (7 furlongs) at York. Eagle Mountain was a 220,000 guineas (A\$550,000) yearling at the UK Tattersalls Sale & overall now has 5 wins & 7 placings from 16 starts.

Viva Pataca ready for the world



Viva Pataca strolled to victory in the Cathay Pacific International Cup Trial in the manner of a horse that must surely hold an outstanding chance of making it third time lucky in the Turf World Championships next month.

Fourth in the Cathay Pacific Hong Kong Cup in 2006 and second last year, trainer John Moore maintains Viva Pataca seeks to put the record straight in the HK\$20m race "in the form of his life."

It would be impossible to argue with the assessment, especially as the six-year-old had to shrug off a late injury concern with a capped elbow on his off-foreleg.

Winning this HK Gr.2 trial over the Cup distance of 2000m for the second successive season, Viva Pataca was, as usual, patiently handled by Darren Beadman and cruised to the fore under a stranglehold at the top of the home straight.

Only passing the furlong pole did Beadman finally ask his mount to lengthen past a flat-out Hawkes Bay and comfortably establish a margin of a length and a quarter at the post, while Jackpot Delight stayed on from the rear to take third. Packing Winner, hero of last season's Citi Hong Kong Champions & Chater Cup, yielded ground in the final furlong having made the running on his first run for almost six months.

With exactly four weeks to go before his next assignment in Hong Kong's richest race, Moore's plans for Viva Pataca are straightforward.

"He's really coming along well. Actually, I think he's already

reached his peak now so I'm hoping we can keep him where he is. Everything went to plan today. Darren rode a great race, the horse won with some ease and I'm just hoping he can hold it all together. If he does, he will have a great chance of winning the Cup for Hong Kong," he said.

"I've done a little more work with the horse this season. The way he won first up was a bit of a surprise but we've trained him so he's really fit, absolutely 100 per cent, for the main event on the 14th of next month - even if he may be there already."

Expanding on the mild injury scare in the run-up to the race, Moore added: "He was shod on Monday and there was a slight infection in his elbow afterwards but we managed it as best we could. He's had this before, though, so we were always confident of managing it and we'll be extra vigilant with him between now and the Cup." At most other meetings, the Class 1 Panasonic Cup (1600m) would have easily stood out as the day's feature but this race, dating back to 1984/85, produced a terrific performance from Thumbs Up making just his second start in Hong Kong from towards the bottom of the weights.

Judged on his ready victory from a number of high profile rivals, Danny Shum's fast improving import from New Zealand appears firmly on the path of the Mercedes-Benz Hong Kong Derby in March.

Aust Racing Board Starts Whip Control Consultation

Australian Racing Board chairman Bob Bentley wrote to each Principal Racing Authority, the Australian Jockeys' Association, the Australian Trainers Association, Equine Veterinarians Australia & the Australian Thoroughbred Racehorse Owners Council "as part of the consultation process for changes to controls on whip use". The consultation process "will focus on a number of draft measures that have been identified for industry consideration & comment" including:

- * Introduction of padded whips & banning the use of traditional whips to be considered.
- * Specific proscription of use of the whip: using an action that raises the rider's arm above shoulder height; when horse is clearly winning; & where no reasonable prospect of improving a horse's placing.
- * Restrictions on the amount of in-running whip use.
- * A requirement that whips not to be drawn on 2YOs.
- * Enforcing the current controls of excessive or unnecessary whip use.

Takeover Target Aimed At January NZ Gr1

Trainer Joe Janiak confirmed he is keen to send multiple Gr1-winning 9YO gelding & 2006 Global Sprint Challenge champion Takeover Target (Celtic Swing-Shady Stream, by Archregent) to New Zealand to tackle January's Gr1 Telegraph Handicap at Trentham in Wellington, after NZ authorities indicated current quarantine protocols may relaxed.

Big Brown Belmont Loss Cost IEAH US\$50-60m

In the US, IEAH Stables co-president Michael Iavarone told CNBC.com the star 3YO Big Brown's controversial defeat in this year's Gr1 Belmont Stakes "cost the colt's owners between US\$50-60 million". Jockey Kent Desormeaux pulled up the Gr1 Kentucky Derby & Gr1 Preakness Stakes winner as he attempted to complete the US 3YO Triple Crown at Belmont Park in June. Iavarone said Big Brown "would have commanded a US\$300,000 stud fee had he retired as a Triple Crown winner". Instead Big Brown will stand the 2009 breeding season for US\$65,000 at Three Chimneys Farm in Kentucky.



Irish Prize-Money Cut 7% Amid Economic Gloom

Ireland's racing industry is "preparing to face the full force of the economic storm, after the sport's ruling body announced significant reductions in prize-money as part of an extensive package of cost-cutting measures," reported guardian.co.uk. Horse Racing Ireland's budget for 2009 will cut total prize-money (a "key indicator of the health of any racing industry") by €4.2 million (A\$8m) to a total of €56.5 million (A\$107.4m), a drop of just over 7%. The announcement "follows a significant cut in the government's Horse & Greyhound Fund (in last month's Irish Budget) & suggests Irish racing's growth has been stopped in its tracks". HRI also announced cuts to integrity costs of €5.8 million (A\$11m) & a freeze on capital developments at racecourses, with no new projects receiving approval "in the short term". The Curragh's planned €100 million (A\$190m) redevelopment was postponed earlier last

month. In addition, HRI will seek savings of €1.3 million (A\$2.47m) within its own organisation, including "a 10-month pay freeze for all staff & Tote Ireland employees", as well as freezing all grants paid to industry bodies (such as the Irish Farriery School & Irish Horse Welfare Trust) at their 2008 levels. HRI chief executive Brian Kavanagh commented: "Nobody likes to be making these sort of decisions, but the view we take is that they are inevitable & necessary to get our house in order & put us in position to get back to growth again. It's not the end of the world, but it is the 1st time probably in the last 15 years that we're moving off a pattern of growth & into negative territory. But that's the environment we're in over here & in other countries too. We decided that we would put it all together & get all the pain over with in one go, rather than drip-feed the announcements bit-by-bit."

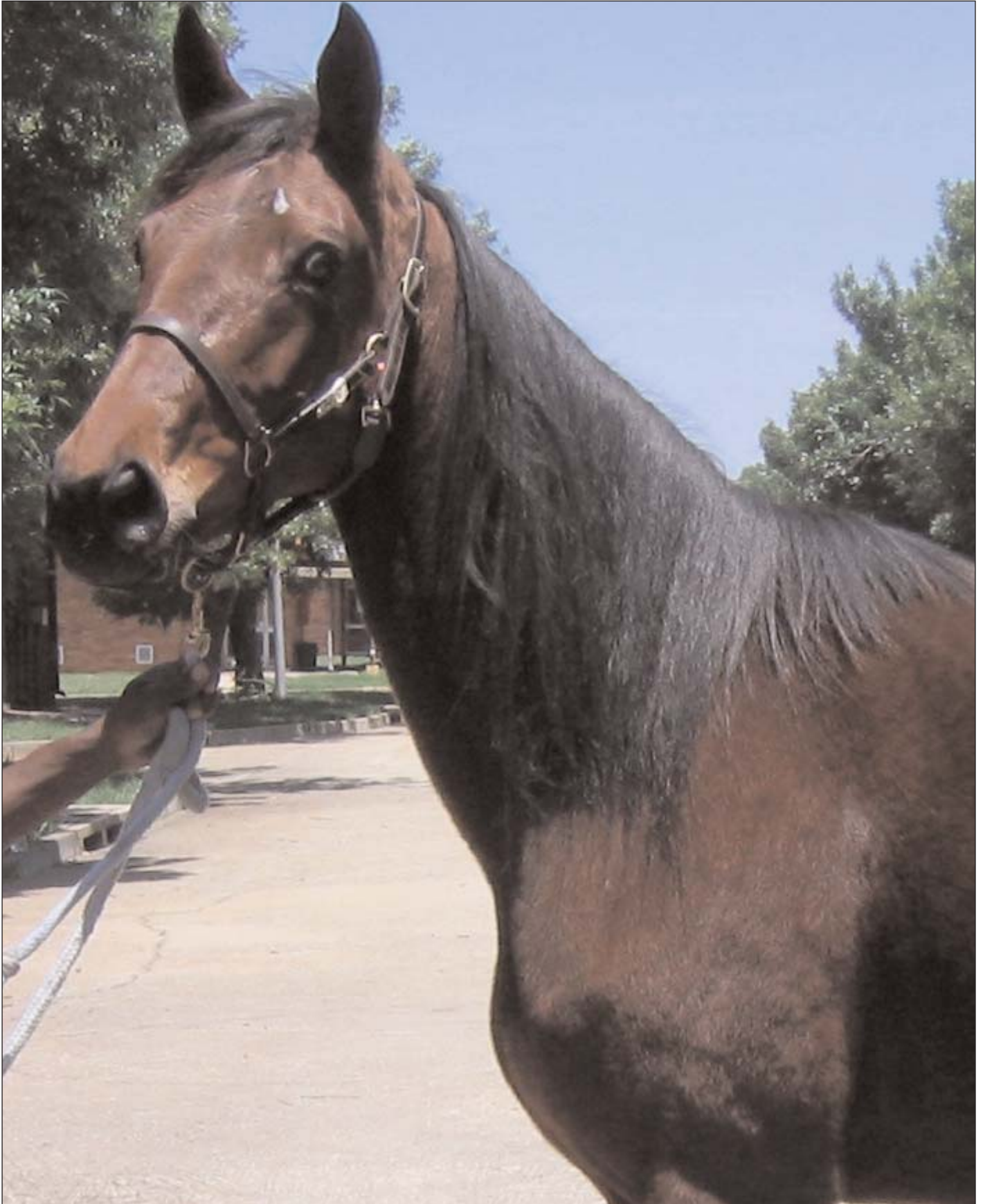
The Tavern on the Park



The old Tavern Restaurant at Clairwood Racecourse has been revamped and refurbished and now houses a new up market TAB facility named The Tavern on the Park.

The new air-conditioned TAB facility opened its doors on Monday, December 1 and boasts a spacious new bar area, tasty meals, excellent views of the Clairwood track and winning post, comfortable seating, good security and ample parking. A bookmaking facility was opened on December 16 and slot machines will be installed in the near future.

Transformation Fund acquires Swedish Trotter



In line with Gold Circle's stated transformation policy, Operett Swing (SWE), an imported Swedish trotter has been acquired by the Gold Circle Transformation Fund. By the successful USA sire Rite On Line, and out of Millian Key, Operett Swing is nominated to participate in the KZN Premier's First harness Challenge series of 10 races. She is trained by William Mhlaba and stabled at the Summerveld Jockey Academy