

J&B MET WINNER: POCKET POWER

DAVID THISELTON

Pocket Power wrote himself into the South African record books after winning the Grade I R2million J&B Met over 2000m at Kenilworth in emphatic style.

The Mike Bass-trained stalwart joined the great Syd Laird-trained Politician as the only horse to have completed the Queen's Plate and J&B Met double twice in successive seasons.

While Politician was described by Syd Laird as the most masculine horse he had ever trained and used to stamp his authority on races with the assertiveness of the dominant entire that he was, Pocket Power, a five-year-old gelding, does it in an altogether different fashion.

He wins with the minimum amount of effort and jockey Bernard Fayd'herbe revealed that the son of Champion Sire, Jet Master, started getting lazy on him after he had hit the front at about the 100m mark.

However his famous surge, that he had produced under a hard ride and a couple of smacks of the whip at about the 250m mark, had carried him far enough clear of the Charles Laird-trained Our Giant and he cantered to the line a comfortable winner.

Laird's Vodacom Durban July winner Hunting Tower finished third just ahead of a slightly unlucky Buy And Sell, who was Highveld trainer Sean Tarry's second string runner.

Laird had said during the week that he had wanted a good pace and was prepared to set it and his least fancied runner, Likeithot, duly took an immediate lead and set a brisk gallop. Laird stable jockey Anton Marcus sat second on Pick Six. Wonder Lawn was next best, followed by Laird's personal fancy, Our Giant, who was sitting beautifully on the rails with July second-placed Buy And Sell outside of him.

Pocket Power had sensibly been kept one wide by Fayd'herbe to minimise any chance of being boxed in and was sitting midfield on the outside of second-favourite, Succesful Bidder.

Hunting Tower was tracking Pocket Power, just like he had done in the July.

The pace slowed as they made their way around the turn.

Pick Six was the first to challenge in the straight but his effort was shortlived and when Our Giant moved off the rail to go around him, Buy And Sell was bumped and squeezed out slightly between Our Giant and Likeithot.

Our Giant took over but soon the crowd were watching what could easily have been an action replay of many big races at Kenilworth over the last two seasons, the familiar sight of Pocket Power, head down, sweeping to the front with nonchalant ease.

He finished 1,25 lengths clear of Our Giant.

Hunting Tower had been unable to live with Pocket Power when the latter had put in his effort but flew up to deny Buy And Sell, who had run on resolutely after the bumping incident, third place.

Owner Marsh Shirliff secured Pocket Power, a Zandvliet-bred horse, for R190 000 at the Bloodstock South Africa Cape Yearling Sale in 2004 but later sold a share to the under-bidder, Arthur Webber.

Shirliff's blue, white and pink silks have become among the most well-known in the country since he teamed up with the masterful Mike Bass.



There was a big crowd present and they enjoyed a perfect day with a brisk breeze, that led to a slight headwind, acting as a welcoming coolant in the boiling hot conditions. Course manager, Dean Diedricks, presented a track in superb condition and all horses enjoyed a fair chance. Besides the big one, the rest of the day belonged to the rampant Justin Snaith yard, who are currently on top of the National Trainer's list, and Bernard Fayd'Herbe.



Snaith's brilliant British-bred filly, Dancer's Daughter, who is owned by Graham Beck, looks a certainty to one day join Pocket Power in South African racing's hall of fame after winning her second Grade I race within three weeks.

In the R400 000 Fancourt Majorca Stakes over 1600m, she fought to some extent with Bernard Fayd'Herbe for a good deal of the way before the straight, as she had done in the Grade I TBA Paddock Stakes three weeks ago, but even these antics were of no real concern to her supporters.

She showed instant acceleration under the whip at the 300m mark having already moved into the lead and from then the race was over as a contest.

Two former winners of the Grade I Thekwini Stakes for juveniles over 1600m at Clairwood, Royal Fantasy and Nania, finished second and third at the generous odds of 100-1 and 16-1 respectively, while last year's Equus champion juvenile, Rat Burana, finished fourth.

In the final Grade I of the day, the R500 000 Investec Cape Derby, the Snaith-trained Russian Sage was kept going in tremendous style by stable jockey Richard Fourie to deny Bernard Fayd'Herbe a Grade I treble. Fayd'Herbe finished second on Tan Can ahead of Bucked Off and Golden Reveira. Snaith had five winners on the day while Fayd'Herbe had three.

JUSTIN SNAITH YARD IS ON A ROLL

DAVID THISELTON

The Justin Snaith yard's current roll is akin to a snowball gathering speed as it just gets bigger and better.

The country's current leading trainer repeated his feat of two seasons back when saddling five winners on J&B Met day, not to mention a head second, but this time the wins included two Grade I's, bringing their seasonal Group I tally to four.

"The Grade I's were our mission and everything else was a bonus," said Jonathan Snaith. "After the good start we felt things were going our way. We are winning for the right people too. What makes it great winning for the big owners is that you know you are not going to lose the horse. We lost Captain's Lover but, training for Team Valor, we always knew that there was potential that she would go overseas." Captain's Lover entered quarantine on Sunday together with two other Team Valor horses, Joshlin and Field Event.

The most exciting horse in the Snaith yard now is undoubtedly the brilliant grey British-bred filly Dancer's Daughter, who won her second Grade I within three weeks when winning the Fancourt Majorca Stakes over 1 600m. Her mission is now the Vodacom Durban July.

"We got a call from the handicapper today and he has put her on a mark of 106", said Jonathan. "With Pocket Power currently on 116 she will therefore carry 53kg in the July as things stand. Bernard said that there would be nothing between the two at those weights. We will have to plan her races carefully to protect her merit rating and will stick to Weight For Age events."

Regarding her stamina capacity and her tendency to pull, he said, "The further she goes the better she will be. The 1 600m is too sharp for her which was why she didn't win as impressively as she did in the Paddock Stakes over 1 800m. Before the race we felt that she could only beat herself. But Bernard is a very strong rider and she gets on very well with him."

Jonathan revealed that Graham Beck had requested that Fayd'herbe get the ride on Dancer's Daughter.

"My father trained for Mr. Beck for about 20 years and this was the first time he had made such a request so we were quite surprised but didn't hesitate. The hardest part was breaking the news to Richard but he took it very well and was very understanding. The move is no

reflection on Richard's ability as he is a first class jockey and without a doubt he will get the July ride on her with Bernard only able to ride to 57kg."

Alvaro, an Australian bred three-year-old gelding by world class sire Galileo, got the ball rolling when beating a quality Graduation Plate field.

"We did the right thing by missing the Derby as this will give him his confidence back," said Jonathan. "Richard got off and said he is a machine. He reckons there is not much between him and Russian Sage."

Justin has the KZN Guineas in Durban's Champions Season in mind for Alvaro.

After Girl In Every Port had finished a head second in the second race, Sparkling Gem, a two year old daughter of current sire of note, Joshua Dancer, romped home by 3,25 lengths in the Listed Lexus Summer Juvenile Stakes, beating a couple of highly touted horses.

"I know Anton Marcus rates Commissionerstreet highly but Sparkling

Gem dodded home. It will be amazing if she can stay as there will no doubt be offers flying around. But the owners love their racing and a very good offer would have to be made."

Justin does not risk sending two-year-olds to Durban where the winter going is firmer than in the Cape, and she will likely be rested for now.

Justin said of Russian Sage, the winner of the Grade I Investec Cape Derby, "he has had a long season and deserves a rest so I don't know whether I will be able to get him ready for the Guineas in Durban in time but that is his target."

Snow Drift, who won the ninth, may go for the Drill Hall Stakes.

The yard will only send ten of their

best horses for the Champions Seasons, where they will stay at Clairwood, but are considering raiding with a big team on Vodacom Durban July day.

Meanwhile the yard will be doing their compulsory African Horse Sickness vaccinations now so are likely to be quiet for a while.

"It is the worst thing you can do to a horse," said Justin. "It takes about six weeks out of their work."



DE KOCK OFF TO A FLYER IN DUBAI

PETER WARD

It promised to be an exciting night for the Mike De Kock Dubai team and so it proved with three winners, a second and a fourth from six runners. Asiatic Boy and Honour Devil, both owned by Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Maktoum, shared top honours on a very satisfying night.

Honour Devil won the same three-year-old conditions race that Asiatic Boy had won last year in equally impressive style. Always on the pace under Johnny Murtagh in the seven-furlong dirt race, and despite showing signs of greenness, the son of Honour And Glory was kicked clear over a furlong out and won going away from what appeared a good field.

Murtagh was impressed: "He was green throughout and it is only his second run. When I asked him to quicken and gave him a flick he has done it really well even though he was having a look about for most of the race. He will get further but needs to improve a lot to win a Classic however, he strikes as the type to do so."

Asiatic Boy, the only horse to have won the UAE Triple Crown, was dropping to six furlongs for the first time for the yard but won the night's feature, the Group 3 Al Shindagha Sprint in the style of a quality performer. Unbeaten on the Nad Al Sheba dirt, he struggled for pace in the early stages but was soon in his stride and travelling powerfully.

Murtagh, again in the saddle, was forced to angle out for a gap and it was his third such attempt which finally proved lucky just over a furlong out. Once in the clear he ran on to land the spoils well to the delight of his trainer: "He was a bit outpaced but we expected that knowing he has that touch of class. He is a powerful galloping horse with class so we knew he could cope. "We may go for a round of the Maktoum Challenge or the Burj Mile next but will wait and see after I speak to the Sheikh first."

Murtagh added: "I was always confident I could get there once a gap appeared. They are two very nice horses and something to look forward to this year." **Drift Ice** made the perfect start to the evening winning the opening 1300m handicap, the first Carnival turf race of 2008. Kevin Shea was in the saddle and said: "He was well drawn for once and that has certainly helped. They went a decent gallop and he has travelled well. He came on a lot for his first run and is a nice solid handicapper." **Divine Jury** was caught close home in the 1500m turf handicap, while Engrupido was a never nearer fourth in the concluding 10-furlong turf handicap.



The Michael Roberts Show

DAVID THISELTON

Michael Roberts, an eleven-time South African and one-time British champion jockey, choked back the tears at Scottsville after his stable jockey, Ian Sturgeon, got his charge West Coast Gold home to win the race named in his honour, the Listed R125 000 Michael Roberts Handicap over 1800m.

Roberts had earlier got his day off to a fine start when his charge Hot Ember, who was backed in from 16/10 into 6/10 favourite, got home under a cool ride from Sturgeon in the second race on the card, the Mystiko Maiden Plate over 1200m for fillies and mares.

Roberts termed it a "dream come true" and what had made it doubly special was that both his daughters had come out from England for the day while he also had some other overseas visitors with him. In an emotional moment he thanked owners John and Karen Newsome of Fieldspring Racing for their kindness, his vets Manfred Rohwer and John McVeigh who had helped him a lot with West Coast Gold, his physio Beth Shaw, who had even been there yesterday morning working on the big son of Rich Man's Gold, his assistant Puppet Nel, his grooms and the breeders, Maine Chance Farms.

"This means a lot to me", he said before praising his jockey. "I'm



hard on him but Ian rode a fantastic race. I told him before that he's on top, I've done my job, and you know he's the class horse of the race. Ian's put a lot of work into the yard and a big thankyou to him." West Coast Gold broke from the widest draw of all and when it was clear that there was not much pace in the race, Sturgeon took him around horses to the front, just before the turn out of the back straight.

The horse seemed to love it out there and, after being kept to the centre of the straight from the wide false rail, was still full of running when Sturgeon picked him up at about the 300m mark.

He never looked like being caught and passed the line 0,75 lengths clear of the Bart Rice-trained Royal Day with Kumaran Naidoo's Tamarino Bay and the stable companion to West Coast Gold, Silver Empire, narrowly beaten into third and fourth respectively.

It was one of the rides of the season.

Roberts had earlier said of the day, "It's very special to me when I go through the card and look at all the great horses I've been associated with in the past. I still get a lump in my throat. It's very kind of Gold Circle. My family and I really appreciate it, not forgetting the support from the public who are always behind me."

Roberts regards Sledgehammer as the best South African horse he has ridden and the great Mtoto as the best overseas.

"Sledgehammer was owned by one of the nicest people and one of the greatest owners of South African racing, Mr. Cyril Hurwitz, and trained by Fred Rickaby, whom I still regard as one of the greatest trainers we've had. He was a great horse, he had gears and up to a mile he was unbelievable because you could sit anywhere with him before pulling him out. Unfortunately he had a few setbacks and fell in the Guineas with me and after that he wasn't quite the horse we expected him to be but he still won the Met and beat Elevation. Overseas Mtoto was phenomenal, he was up with the great horses like Dancing Brave. The first time I sat on him I said to the trainer this is the best animal I've ever sat on and he laughed and said that your horses in South Africa can't be that good and I said, no, they pretty good. He was special."

Jeff Lloyd and Glyn Schofield: Champions

Jeff Lloyd and Glyn Schofield have made a huge impact in their first few weeks in Australia and are already being hailed as Sydney's top jockeys.

On New Year's Day Schofield rode the first winner on the card at Randwick, booting home Alotta Lute, who paid \$6 on the tote, for trainer Gerald Ryan.

Lloyd rode a treble in the same meeting, two of them for former South African trainer David Payne and one for Paul Perry. The Payne horses paid \$2.50F and \$2.40F apiece while Perry's charge paid \$4.40.

More recently Lloyd and Schofield rode a winner apiece for David Payne and Bede Murray respectively for payouts of \$2.70F and \$12.00 respectively, while Schofield booting home the \$4.00 favourite Sequinella for David Payne in the fifth race at Randwick (Kensington track).

Lloyd's first meeting was on the 8th of December and in his fifth ride, in the last race of the day, he rode Vecchia Roma (\$6.50) to victory for David Payne.

Schofield made a forgettable start to his new career in Australia when his first mount at Wyong on December 19, Miss Bax, fell on the home turn.

He was not even supposed to be riding at the meeting. He had been in Parramatta purchasing a new car in the morning when he agreed to rush to Wyong to ride Miss Bax after Hugh Bowman could not make the mare's weight.

Fortunately, Schofield walked away from the incident unharmed and in his first meeting proper at Royal Randwick on December 22, he booting home Commemorating (\$3.10F) for trainer Bede Murray in his second ride of the day.

All in all Lloyd has ridden ten winners in 46 starts for a percentage strike rate of 21.74 while Schofield has ridden five winners in 32 starts for a percentage strike rate of 15.63%.

This is what Ray Thomas had to say about the pair in the Daily Telegraph on January 2:

SYDNEY punters, preparing for a racing year without champion jockeys Darren Beadman and Glen Boss, have seemingly already

anointed their replacements, South African riding legends Jeff Lloyd and Glyn Schofield.

Lloyd and Schofield have taken Sydney racing by storm since arriving here less than a month ago and began 2008 by cleaning up half the program with four winners between them at Randwick yesterday.

Lloyd, 46, a winner of more than 4000 races worldwide including nearly 80 at Group One level, rode brilliantly for his first Sydney Hat-trick and vaulted into equal fifth on the premiership.

Schofield, 40, showed the class and poise which has helped him win more than 1500 races, showing initiative to drive Alotta Lute forward to take up the running in a slow-run race, a tactic which proved decisive.

With favourite sons Beadman and Boss now riding under contract in Hong Kong, Sydney punters are shifting their allegiances to the champion South African jockeys.

"The punters are not afraid of backing the horses Lloyd and Schofield are riding, all their winners were well-backed today," leading bookie Col Tidy said. "These guys can ride, they just keep winning races."

Payne, Sydney's in-form trainer, was telling anyone who was prepared to listen some weeks ago that Lloyd and Schofield would make a success of their moves to Sydney.

"I had no doubts Jeff and Glyn would do well here," Payne said. "They are both very good jockeys, they were proven at the top level all over the world before they came to Sydney."

Payne also gave an insight into his stable's stunning success since Sydney racing resumed.

"I told everyone not to spell their horses after EI (equine influenza)," Payne said. "We had experience of EI in South Africa 20 years ago and we learned then it was best to give the horses a run or two at least before sending them for a spell."

Payne is currently lying second in the Trainer's Premiership behind many time Champion New South Wales trainer, Gai Waterhouse. Lloyd is currently leading the jockey championship.

Owner of the month: Dec 07 - Doug Campbell



The Gold Circle Owner Achiever Award for the month of December has been awarded to Doug Campbell.

One of the most affable personalities in South African racing, Doug has shown a commitment to the racing industry that is well beyond the normal and has proven himself as a talented and dedicated trainer, owner and breeder. He was also heavily involved in the development of the amateur racing movement.

A physical education teacher before embarking on his career as a racehorse trainer, he established at his farm in the Richmond area of the Province his own training and breeding centre from which many winners have emerged.

During the month of December he saddled eight winners, six of which he owned in partnership with others among his clients. He began the month with Capriano Warrior at Scottsville, then Uncle Jack and Angel Club at Clairwood, and La Brillante, Shady Oak and Jumeira Jane at Greyville - the last two being at the final racemeeting of the year. He is a credit to the racing industry and his success is worthy of the monthly award.

Well done Doug!

Murtagh No 1 for O'Brien

Johnny Murtagh can look forward to having the pick of some of the world's top thoroughbreds after being appointed number one rider to the Coolmore operation.

The 37-year-old has ridden a number of big-race winners for Aidan O'Brien over the years, including the Epsom Derby on High Chaparral in 2002. He was a regular on the trainer's horses in Britain throughout 2007 with the then Coolmore number one Kieren Fallon suspended from riding by the British authorities pending the outcome of his court case at the Old Bailey, which ended in him being acquitted of all charges. Murtagh's appointment appears to bring to an end Fallon's association with the powerhouse stable. The Coolmore team stood by Fallon throughout his trial, but he was hit with an 18-month worldwide suspension by France Galop last week after testing positive for a prohibited substance, although he has launched an appeal.

Speaking from Dubai, Murtagh said: "I am over the moon. It is a great opportunity and I am really looking forward to riding for the team. "I am 37 now and my best years lie ahead of me."

A statement from Coolmore said: "Owners John Magnier, Michael Tabor and Derrick Smith are delighted to announce that Johnny Murtagh will be the retained jockey for their horses at Ballydoyle and elsewhere for the 2008 season."

O'Brien said: "Johnny has already enjoyed plenty of success as part of the team at Ballydoyle and we are delighted to have him on board."

His agent Eddie Byrne said: "Johnny is absolutely delighted with the appointment, and to be riding for John Magnier, Michael Tabor and Derrick Smith. "He'd like to thank Mick Halford and Ger Lyons, who have given him many winners in the last couple of seasons, and hopes to ride for them again when available. "He's contracted to ride in Dubai until after the World Cup and then he will be coming back immediately. He is looking forward to his new appointment." Lyons was delighted for Murtagh.

He said: "He rang me with the news and I'm absolutely delighted. It took them long enough and I'm surprised he didn't get it years ago. "He's one of the best jockeys in the world, if not the best. I'm delighted for him, it's the right time for him and I'm just thrilled for him. "Johnny's at his best when he's riding the big horses. When he's riding Group One winners he's the best in the business. "He rode me my first ever winner and he's been brilliant for me throughout. "I will continue to use him when he's available and he's still my first choice jockey when he's available." Halford also heard the news from Murtagh himself. "He's in great form, it's a fabulous opportunity for him," said the Curragh trainer. "We are disappointed to be losing Johnny but he's been a wonderful help to us over the years. "He's a great friend and I'm delighted for him from that point of view. "We wish him all the best and he's thoroughly deserving of the position."

S'Mango Khumalo flying high

DAVID THISELTON

S'Mango Khumalo has always caught the eye with his streamlined riding style and he is proving to be one of the finds of the decade for South African horseracing.

Early in the New Year at Fairview, Port Elizabeth, a venue to which he regularly travels from his base in Johannesburg, he rode the jackpot, booting home four Mitchell Wiese-trained horses, Fringe Benefit (7/1), Only She Can (16/1), Senor Josh (3/1) and Bartz (16/10). However he lists the day at Flamingo Park in Kimberley when he rode five winners as his most memorable.

Recently he has partnered two Tyrone Zackey-trained charges, the promising three-year-old Derby prospect, Warrior Man, and the stakes winning older horse, Singing Sword, and regards them as the best horses he's been associated with so far.

Zackey said of Kumalo, "A few years ago in his appy days he came to ride work for us and I was so impressed with his seat and balance that I have always predicted since that he'd get to the top. I needed a lightweight jockey recently and got him for the ride and he rode a beautiful race so I have kept him on the horses he has ridden. The thing that impresses me most is his judgement of pace and also the way he goes about his business. He is very professional and on the occasions when the public have put big money on the horses, he is as cool as a cucumber, like a Piere Strydom or Mark Khan."

Trainer Joe Soma concurs, "I think S'Manga could end up being a top, top jockey and the first black jockey to really leave his mark if he is nurtured correctly. He has a natural talent and a lovely affinity with horses. He has a very good attitude for the game as he is always laughing and joking but when I see him get on a horse he goes into his own world. As long as he can control his head, as he's at that age where big-headedness and laziness can take over, I think he'll go all the way and I hope he does as he's a very nice kid."

Horses were not on the agenda in Khumalo's life until talent scouts from the Jockey's Academy visited his school, Mzuvele High, in Kwa Mashu.

He easily fulfilled the physical requirements and passed all the interviews and in the year 2000 he joined the Academy.

"The first time I got on a horse they said I had a natural seat and everything was right," said the well-spoken youngster.

He had his own style and still does although these days he looks up to Piere Strydom, for his judgement of pace and his balance, along with Weichong Marwing and Anthony Delpech.

His first race-ride was for Clodagh Shaw on Bronze Apollo at Clairwood Park over 1200m on November 26, 2002, and he finished ninth while his first winner actually came in Zimbabwe.

It was his tenth ride and he remembers phoning his mother beforehand to tell her he was riding so it was a special moment when he booted home Lightning Don for the Lisa Harris yard.

"It was the most incredible feeling," he recalled.

His confidence picked up during his stint in Zimbabwe and he then began riding on the Highveld, mainly for Alec Laird and Sean Tarry.

"Everything picked up from there and I was also travelling all the time to Port Elizabeth and Kimberley," he said.

He regards Turffontein standside, where judgement of pace plays a big role, as his favourite track.

"Judgement of pace comes with experience," he said. "As you learn to get along with horses at work you learn how much they have left."

He believes Warrior Man, whom he rides work everyday, has a big chance in the Derby and at this stage rates the Charles Laird-trained Causation, who disappointed in his last start at Kenilworth, as the horse to beat.

Khumalo is a lightweight rider who welcomed the recent increase in the minimum weight as a "brilliant" change as this has allowed him to feel stronger in the saddle.

He has ridden in Mauritius, which he said was an "amazing experience with the pace they go at and all the crowds going crazy around you", but has decided to make a name for himself over here before thinking of overseas goals.

"To become champion jockey is my aim," he said. "I have the ability and must now just put my head down and try harder."

SAF Mare Wins U. S. G3 for Valor

ALEXANDRA ROSE TAKES GRADE 3 MONROVIA HANDICAP AT SANTA ANITA, TEAM VALOR INTERNATIONAL/JUAN VAN HEERDEN MARE WINS SPRINTING, STABLE RUNS FIRST AND THIRD IN \$100,000 GRASS STAKES DOWN THE HILL

Alexandra Rose started the year off with a bang for her owner Team Valor International by storming to a three-quarter length victory on New Year's Day in the Grade 3 Monrovia Handicap sprinting 6 ½ furlongs down the infield hillside turf course at Santa Anita.

Rafael Bejarano allowed the 6-year-old bay mare a chance to settle in the run down the hill and kept her widest of all crossing the dirt path into the homestretch. When Bejarano cut her loose in the lane, the 6 to 1 chance had no trouble collaring Team Valor's other distaffer Audacious Chloe and was starting to draw away nearing the finish.

Alexandra Rose earned \$66,240 for the victory, her second in a stakes following a triumph at 2 in the Golden Slipper Stakes at Greyville. "This was the first time I've been on her. I didn't want to use her speed too early, so I was able to follow the speed. When we passed the quarter pole she was handling the course real well and she tried real hard. She tried to get out with me just a little bit, but she's a very good horse."

The South African mare capped a big first day of 2008 for the globally involved stable, as from four runners today TVI scored wins in feature races with two South African mares in Alexandra Rose and Jacaranda Jane (Turfway Park), ran second in a maiden race in Cape Town with another South African filly and got third in the Monrovia when favored Audacious Chloe was moved up from fourth on a disqualification.

Acquired by Team Valor after she had become a Grade 2 winner in South Africa, Alexandra Rose was narrowly beaten in a photo finish at 3 by Champion Bad Girl Runs for the Grade 1 Cape Fillies Guineas 2 years ago and showed she still had an interest in racing last season when she ran well for second in a Listed stakes in Dubai when trained by Mike de Kock.

Sent to Neil Drysdale in California, Alexandra Rose experienced some tenderness in her front feet, which required considerable patience on the part of her connections.

"She turned the corner last month when I had the blacksmith square off both front toes," the trainer said. "Since then she has been training like the Grade 1 mare we always thought she would be for us. I think we will point her next for the Grade 2 Buena Vista going a mile, which is her best distance."

Alexandra Rose is a daughter of Caesour, sire for Team Valor of its international Champion Filly Irridescence. Alexandra Bi, the dam, is a daughter of leading European broodmare sire Darshaan and is currently represented by the very promising South African-based Oaks candidate Albizia, best in 2 of 3 outings for the owner-breeder Varsfontein Stud.

