

JAY PEG AT HIS BEST



BRENDAN PATHER

It was another glorious evening on the international racing arena for South Africa as one of the country's greatest racing ambassadors in recent times, Jay Peg, put in a tremendous performance to hold all at bay to win the \$2.2 million Gr I Singapore Airlines International Cup at Kranji racecourse in Singapore.

In a similarly courageous performance to his Dubai Duty Free (Gr I) victory, Jay Peg hit the front at the top of the straight and held off all challengers in trademark "never-say-die" fashion. It took driving ride from Anton Marcus to keep his mind on the job but the fast finishers didn't get close enough to trouble Jay Peg and the four-year-old South African-bred son of Camden Park never looked in trouble.

The pace was on from the jump with the locally trained Chevron putting in some quick early fractions and opening up a six-length lead down the back straight. Jay Peg had settled well in second on the rail after jumping on terms and, as he did in the Duty Free, stayed out wide on the first turn.

Marcus moved in quickly on the home turn and Jay Peg began to labour a little around two furlongs out, looking for company, but once the others moved up he kicked into top gear and was pulling away inside the final furlong. Local favourite Recast ran on strongly to surprise in second ahead of second favourite Balius who also stayed on well from the rear.

Jay Peg's international trainer, Herman Brown, was visibly relieved after the race and his team was justly rewarded for a well planned and executed international raid. Brown said: "It was fantastic! After winning in Dubai I thought this was a good race to target."

"I was nervous before the race. He was sweating so much but Anton rode

such a great race. He got a good break at the right time and fought them off well." Anton Marcus was visibly drained after the race said: "I always thought they would come back to me. I was feeling a little exhausted at the furlong but the horse was still going strongly."

"After winning in Dubai, the fairytale continues. It's unbelievable."

Brothers Selwyn and Basil were both on hand to congratulate Anton on another great ride.

Co-owner Selwyn was almost speechless after the race and like his fellow owners, somewhat overcome with emotion. After catching his breathe, Selwyn said: "Dubai was almost surreal as we did not expect it. But the pressure was on tonight as it was Jay Peg's chance to disprove the doubters." "It's always more nerve wrecking when you're the favourite and the pressure was certainly on tonight and all week long." "It was another great ride from Anton. He rode a more patient race this time around, not concerned with the tear away and he timed his move perfectly. It was wonderful to watch."

Basil Marcus, Jay Peg's trainer in South Africa, had said earlier in the week that Jay Peg had never looked better and the Singapore Turf Club officials agreed as the four-year-old entire was voted best turned out on the night following the pre-race parade. Basil looked relieved after race but was quick to congratulate Brown and the pair were looking forward to sitting down with connections and planning their next move with the gallant four-year-old.

The sense of relief was evident for co-owners Marsh Shirliff, Paul Loomes and Etienne Braun who were all on hand. It had been an emotionally charged week-long build-up to the event and when Jay Peg had finally calmed down enough to join in the celebrations, he was the beneficiary of hugs and kisses from a great team of owners. Shirliff confirmed that Jay Peg would head back to Dubai and then talks would begin as to whether to have a crack at the Cox Plate in Australia.

Golden Horse Casino Sprint Day

THE top sprinting stars in South African racing have been entered in the four Grade 1 races to be run over 1 200m on Golden Horse Casino Sprint Day at Scottsville Racecourse on Saturday, May 31.

The new sprinting sensations JJ The Jet Plane and Warm White Night were nominated by their stables in three of the four events and the only big name not mentioned on the entry list is that of the superstar Mythical Flight. The Sean Tarry runner, who finished second in the Golden Horse Casino Sprint last year, disappointed in the recent Computaform Sprint and attempts to determine his present condition were unsuccessful as his trainer has been out of the country.

JJ The Jet Plane, from the stable of Lucky Houdalakis, is now all the rage having won feature sprints in his last three starts including the Grade 1 Computaform Sprint at Turffontein. The three-year-old Jet Master gelding has won in impressive fashion and will no doubt start favourite for the R500 000, Grade 1 Golden Horse Casino Sprint.

Among his potential opposition in this race will be Gary Alexander's Dominion Royale gelding Flintlock who finished a close second to him in the Computaform Sprint. Justin Snaith's Relinyane and Red Flyer from the stable of Alistair Gordon.

There were only 11 entries for the R500 000, Grade 1 Gold Reef Resorts Medallion for juveniles with the South African Nursery winner Warm White Night heading the list. The Western Winter colt has been hugely impressive in winning both his starts, the most recent when he thrashed the field in the SA Nursery at Turffontein.

Trainer Corinne Bestel has nominated her Joshua Dancer filly She's A Winner for this race as well as for the Allan Robertson Fillies Championship. The unbeaten filly took on the colts at Scottsville when she won the Godolphin Barb Stakes recently in easy fashion.

The R350 000, Grade 1 Allan Robertson Fillies Championship drew 23 entries and in addition to She's A Winner.

Kesha who has finished third to Merlene De Lago in each of the three features and Mike Azzie's Western Winter filly On Her Toes who split the two when finishing second in the SA Fillies Nursery.

The 26 entries for the R350 000, Grade 1 South African Fillies Sprint included last year's winner of the race, Sean Tarry's Ethereal Lady. She ran fourth in the recent Poinsettia Stakes at Scottsville and should be at her peak when she goes to post for this race.

Maelstrom from the yard of Michael Roberts, who ran second to Ethereal Lady last year, will try to reverse that decision this time round and the Herman Brown yard has nominated the Poinsettia Stakes winner Hot Reception.

The Brazilian-bred Rat Burana from the Mike de Kock yard, who won the Allan Robertson Fillies Championship last year, has been nominated and Justin Snaith has nominated his Vodacom Durban July entry, Dancer's Daughter.

Dancer's Daughter is said by Snaith to be a very versatile filly and with six wins from nine starts including the Paddock Stakes and the Majorca Stakes, her performance against the top speed horses will be interesting to see.



De Kock & Shea Head for UK

Mike de Kock and Kevin Shea have headed for the U.K. for their European campaign.

Shea has never ridden in England, where the racecourses are generally characterised by their undulating topography and unique nature while the local jockeys are traditionally not known for their warmth towards foreign riders, but the nuggety jockey is not one to shirk a challenge.

Both De Kock and Shea had intimated recently that Sun Classique is likely to have the Arc as her target and will probably skip her dates with Royal Ascot and the King George and Queen Elizabeth Stakes while Archipenko is still on target for the Group 1 Prince Of Wales Stakes over approximately 1 900m at the Royal Ascot meeting.

Another De Kock charge to look out for, besides his other Dubai stalwarts, is Argentinian-bred Inca Noble, who was unbeaten in two starts in her home country including a seven length victory in their most important juvenile race.

Sean Tarry went over to England. Recently to monitor the progress of National Colour and to see whether she will be far enough forward to take her place in the Group 1 King Stand Stakes over 1 000m at the Royal Ascot meeting on June 17. The flying grey filly has been staying at the Newmarket stables of Geoff Wragg and hasn't run since chipping a bone in her knee at last year's Dubai Carnival.



Sun Classique

Big Brown

BY DAN FARLEY WWW.RACINGPOST.CO.UK

BIG BROWN delivered the goods as a 1-5 favourite should do in the Preakness Stakes, to remain on target to become the first Triple Crown winner for 30 years.

He followed up his convincing success in the Kentucky Derby by finishing more than five lengths clear of Macho Again, and now heads to Belmont Park on June 7 for a crack at immortality.

The Japanese-trained, impressive recent Belmont Park winner Casino Drive could await Big Brown there, but trainer Rick Dutrow jnr is looking forward to the clash. "The Japanese people are going to find out Godzilla is not dead," he said.

Big Brown's jockey Kent Desormeaux enjoyed a smooth passage in the Preakness, much as he had in the Kentucky Derby two weeks earlier.

This time he was on the rail through the early stages, rather than on the far outside. Desormeaux got his horse off the rail coming to the final turn and the race was soon over. A furlong and a half out Desormeaux was in the clear.

"An armchair ride and a push-button," said Desormeaux, who added that he began looking for competition "at about the half-mile pole".



Big Brown charging to Triple Crown

He said: "I was looking around, trying to make sure nobody slipped inside us. I was actually trying to slow him down. Then at the top of the stretch I pushed the button and said, 'Bye-bye'."

A tremendous cheer from the sunbaked crowd escorted Big Brown to the wire and US racing was given another shot at its 12th Triple Crown winner.

Should he win the Belmont Stakes, Big Brown would become the first Triple Crown winner since Affirmed in 1978.

Dutrow said: "We have got some horse left for the Belmont. Kent rode him for only about a sixteenth of a mile. I think we'll be ready for the Belmont.

"Going down the backside, when Kent got him out and he was laying third on the outside, I knew the race was over. He just bided his time as long as he could. It was beautiful."

The trainer added: "I was nervous, scared about the two weeks, stuff like that, but he's overcome everything.

"It doesn't look like he got on his belly today, so we should have enough horse to get the job done."

Dutrow said that Big Brown would have only one piece of work during the three weeks leading up to the final race in the Triple Crown series.

DAVID THISELTON

South African connected horses feature prominently on the latest World Rankings that are compiled by the World Rankings Supervisory Committee and right up there with the best of these are two that were bred here, Pocket Power and Jay Peg.

Pocket Power is by our current champion sire, Jet Master, while Jay Peg is by the late Camden Park and the two horses were bred by Zandvliet and High Season Stud respectively.

Pocket Power, trained by Mike Bass, is the highest rated horse in South Africa on a merit rated mark of 118 and has been given a figure of 120 by the Rankings Committee along with Sun Classique, Jay Peg, Archipenko and Honour Devil.

That makes them the joint 14th highest rated horses in the world.

Sun Classique, an Australian bred formerly trained by Mike Bass and last season's Equus Champion three-year-old Classic filly, left South Africa on a merit rated mark of 107 and her current elevation was due largely to her win in the Grade I US\$5 million Dubai Sheema Classic when under trainer Mike De Kock's tutelage.

Jay Peg, who was formerly trained by Basil Marcus and was the Equus Champion three-year-old Classic male, left South Africa on a merit rated mark of 112 and subsequently won the US\$5 million Dubai Duty Free for trainer Herman Brown.

Honour Devil, an Argentinian bred three-year-old who is trained by De Kock, probably faced weaker opposition than Sun Classique and Jay Peg did when he won the Grade II US\$2 million UAE Derby but in Dubai he is officially rated 121 compared to Jay Peg's 120. The dirt specialists likely participation at this year's Breeder's Cup will give him the opportunity to prove himself against the best.

Archipenko, an Aiden O'Brein chuck out, joined Mike De Kock in Dubai with a British Horse Racing Board rating of 113, and has subsequently finished third in the Dubai Duty Free and won the Group I QE II Cup in Hong Kong.

The highest rated horse in the world is the Dubai World Cup and Breeders Cup Classic winner, Curlin, an American dirt specialist, while the winner of the recent Kentucky Derby, Big Brown, is second.

Japanese-bred horses figure prominently, with three, Admire Moon, Pop Rock and Meisho Samson, in the top dozen. Both Admire Moon and Pop Rock are out of mares by probably their most influential ever sire, the imported horse, Sunday Silence, who failed as a stallion in America.

There are also two Australian-bred horses in the top dozen, the brilliant Hong Kong based sprinter, Sacred Kingdom, and Weekend Hussler, a classic distance gelding who is the second highest rated three-year-old in the world.

The highest rated European horses are the Andre Fabre-trained German-bred Getaway and Goldolphin's French-bred Ramonti.

The only British bred horse to feature in the top dozen is Viva Pataca, Hong Kong's Champion middle distance horse, who was beaten by Archipenko in the QE II Cup.



Curlin & Big Brown Head World Rankings

US 2007 Horse-Of-The-Year & Champion 3YO Male Curlin maintained his ranking as the world's best horse (with a rating of 130) following his victory in March's Gr1 Dubai World Cup, according to the latest release of the World's Leading Horses ratings by the World Rankings Supervisory Committee. US Gr1 Kentucky Derby winner Big Brown has jumped to Number 2 on the list (with a rating of 126).

The top horses are:

- * **130:** Curlin
- * **126:** Big Brown
- * **123:** Admire Moon & Sacred Kingdom
- * **122:** Getaway, Good Ba Ba, Meisho Samson, Ramonti, Viva Pataca & Weekend Hussler.
- * **121:** Henrythenavigator & Maturida Gogh.
- * **120:** Archipenko, Daiwa Major, Efficient, Honour Devil, Jay Peg, Kip Deville, New Approach, Pocket Power & Sun Classique.
- * **119:** Benny The Bull, Doctor Dino, Duke Of Marmalade, Heatseeker, Lingari, Quijano, Racing To Win & Sirmione.
- * **118:** Admire Jupiter, Apache Cat, Armada, Creachadoir, Delta Blues, Diabolical, Divine Park, Einstein, Go Between, Greg's Gold, Midnight Lute, Miss Andretti, Monterey Jazz, Mythical Flight, Oracle West, Saddex, Super Hornet, Sushisan, Takeover Target, Tiago, Vermilion & Youmzain

OWNER OF THE MONTH - CRAIG EUDEY



STORM CAT PENSIONED AGED 25

US sire Storm Cat (who carried the world's highest stud fee at US\$500,000 from 2002-07 & was standing the 2008 season for US\$300,000 at the Young's family's Overbrook Farm in Kentucky) has been pensioned from stallion duty aged 25 because of declining fertility. Overbrook's manager of stallion operations Ric Waldman confirmed early this morning (Australian time) that Storm Cat (Storm Bird-Terlingua, by Secretariat) impregnated only 3 of 32 mares bred to him this season (he got 68 mares in-foal last year) & noted: "He wasn't stopping any additional mares & his semen quality was dropping off as well. But his health is good for a 25-year-old horse." Storm Cat (who stood for just US\$20,000 in 1991) is represented by 160 stakes-winners & the earners of US\$112 million. He was leading US sire (by year-end progeny earnings) in both 1999 & 2000, as well as 13 times ranking in the Top 15. And his influence is in full force on this year's leading US sires list: 3 of Storm Cat's sons (Giant's Causeway, Stormy Atlantic & Tale Of The Cat) rank in the top 7; in addition "this year's top 2

freshman sires Roll Hennessy Roll & Lion Heart are grandsons of Storm Cat" noted bloodhorse.com. And in the sale ring, dozens of his offspring have sold as yearlings for US\$1 million or more. Storm Cat's top track performers include champions Giant's Causeway, Storm Flag Flying & Sweet Catomine, as well as Gr1-winners Tabasco Cat, Cat Thief, Sharp Cat & Bluegrass Cat. On the track himself, Storm Cat (who raced for Overbrook founder William Young) won the 1985 Gr1 Young America Stakes.



SAF JOCKEY CORMACK TO JOIN MCLACHLAN STABLE

Sunshine Coast trainer Bruce McLachlan "is planning to add South African Sean Cormack, 36, to his list of successful jockey imports to Queensland," reported The Sydney Morning Herald. Cormack "is currently waiting on a visa".



She's A Winner

The Corinne Bestel-trained She's A Winner is one of the most promising juvenile fillies to emerge from a Kwazulu-Natal yard in the last couple of seasons having beaten a well regarded Mike De Kock-trained colt, Forest Path, by a comfortable 2,25 lengths in the Grade III R150 000 Godolphin Barb Stakes at Scottsville recently. It is the mature temperament of the Highlands-bred Joshua Dancer filly that has the Clairwood-based trainer especially excited.

"Alec told me that she was even more composed before her second start than she was for her first," said Bestel. "I am a strong believer that a horse remembers its first experiences of the race-course and she has enjoyed both of her races. She has not been touched by the stick yet. They have been like exercise gallops. She also keeps going back to the manger and is not a fussy eater. That is what you want, a stress-free horse as I think what separates horses is their minds."

Bestel has done very well with the progeny of Joshua Dancer, having trained the likes of six-time winner True Lily, who was unlucky to have had most of her three-year-old career curtailed, and four-time winner, Empress Award.

Bestel went to the National Two Year Old Sale last year to specifically look for another Joshua Dancer and came across She's A Winner, who has a very nice pedigree, being out of a half-sister to the famous sprinter Tommy Hotspur.

"She was a very nice specimen, very well balanced, with just one tiny fault being that she turns in ever so slightly on her off fore. But she has nice big feet and short canon bones so I don't think the turning in will cause her any problems."

It is not Bestel's style to bring horses on early and ironically she believes that this could be why she does well with Joshua Dancers.

"They have a reputation for being hot but that might be because being precocious they are asked to do a lot early," she said. She's A Winner, who cost R130 000, is a typically precocious Joshua Dancer but although Bestel describes her as "bolshy" she is not at all fractious.

Big and robust, she seemed to dwarf the colts in the parade ring for the Godolphin Barb.

"She looks like a three-year-old already," said Bestel. "We brought her back from the sale and broke her in ourselves. In November I gave her some pace work, she took it well, so gave her some more and shortly after that Alec said she was ready to race."

On the morning of her first start on March 12, Bestel arrived to find all of her horses, including She's A Winner, knee deep in water

after 160mm of rain fell and a pre-cast wall, blocking water from the nearby freeway, broke. The racemeeting was switched to Scottsville from Clairwood and it is testimony to the filly's good temperament that she still won comfortably. It was the first time she had ever been on the grass and, while not beating much, it was the manner in which she won that had Bestel particularly happy.

"It has worked out well," said Bestel, "Scottsville is a course that has been the graveyard of many a good horse. It is testing, requires a fit horse and there's no question She's A Winner has a big heart. The fact that she relishes the course is a good sign."

In her second start Bestel looked at the fields for the Strelitzia for fillies and the Godolphin Barb and in a shrewd move decided to run against the colts.

"The field didn't look strong and there were less runners," she said. "We were concerned about the De Kock colt but thought we had the rest beaten. She didn't get cover for long and was on her own from the 500m mark. The others were struggling from a long way out and she came through easily so it was a very encouraging win."

The time was a second faster than that of the Strelitzia Stakes. Jockey Alec Forbes has described She's A Winner as "very decent" and is sticking with her for her next intended target, the

Grade I R350 000 Allan Robertson Fillyies Championships at Scottsville, despite also being associated with another unbeaten KZN-trained juvenile filly, the Dennis Bosch-trained Cool Shadow.

In The Allan Robertson, She's A Winner, who is owned in partnership by Hilton Witz, Peter Adelson, Erich Buhr and Judy Paterson, is likely to face the brilliant, unbeaten Merlene De Lago, who is a beautifully bred Australian filly from the powerful Charles Laird yard.

"We will find out just

how good She's A Winner really is," said Bestel who added that it is every trainer's dream to win Grade I races.

She said that for the smaller yards without buying power to find a top horse is like "finding a needle in a haystack".

"Campaigning a good two-year-old is uncharted territory for me but it's very exciting," she said.

She believes South African racing is in very good health.

"Mike De Kock has been a wonderful ambassador and we all have a lot to be thankful to him for, especially the breeders."

Bestel concluded, "She's A Winner has scope and I believe she will see out a mile in time. I believe any good two-year-old should make a good three-year-old. They don't lose their ability."



SHE'S A WINNER

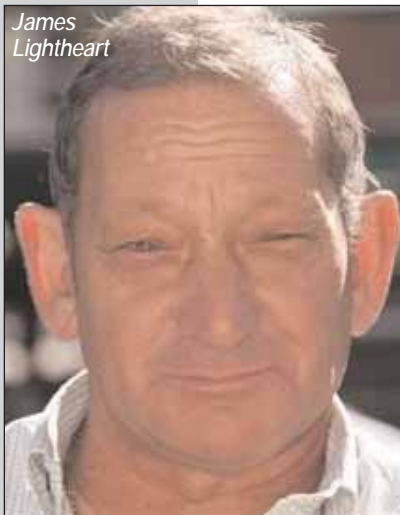
JAMES LIGHHEART PASSES AWAY

LANCE BENSON

Cape trainer James Lighheart passed away suddenly at the age of 66 at his Milnerton yard. He had suffered ill-health and had been briefly hospitalised two months ago with heart and kidney problems. Lighheart was known as a private person who shunned publicity and the limelight and had enjoyed a successful training career spanning some forty years.

Tributes poured in from colleagues and industry associates. Chairman of the Western Province Owners and Trainers Association Rodney Dunn said that Lighheart would be sorely missed as a true character and longstanding trainer who had enjoyed success and shown tremendous affinity with horses from limited opportunities. Gold Circle Western Cape Chapter Chairman Ashraf Mohamed said that the suddenness of Lighheart's death had shocked him deeply: "I spoke to him at Durbanville on Tuesday afternoon and he was in high spirits as I had come to know him. He has been around our racecourses longer than most people and was a part of the fabric of Cape racing. A highly capable and respected horseman who enjoyed maintaining a low profile. On behalf of Gold Circle I extend our sincere condolences to his family and we share their grief at a very sad time."

James Lighheart



Lighheart enjoyed his halcyon years in the 1980's and 1990's and major performers that come to mind include the brilliant son of Jungle Warrior, Western Rocket, who won the 1994 JWS Langerman and Computaform Stakes of the same year as well as the 1995 Cape Derby Futurity. One of his favourite horses was Bushmanland who was the darling of Cape racegoers for many years and won the 1995 Matchem Stakes as well as the Argus Bloodline Guineas. He went on to become a sire with limited opportunity who produced 15 winners from 34 runners, the best known of which is the filly Taking It Deep who was graded race placed and the Dominic Zaki trained Godsmustbecrazy. Bushmanland extraordinarily returned to racing some six years after his retirement when he sadly injured himself in the stalls at Kenilworth and was euthenased. San Louis won the 1981 Richelieu Guineas while his best filly was 1995 Durbanville Oaks winner Noble Prophet, currently a successful broodmare. A game six time winner, she was multiple graded race placed in her career. While as yet unconfirmed, James' sister Brigitte Rees-Gibbs speculated that it was likely that his

son Paul would continue with the training operation. James Godfrey Lighheart is survived by his wife Sylvia, sons Gary and Paul as well as daughters Tania, Tracy and Ellen, two sisters and five grandchildren.



R110 000 Listed Betting World Somerset 1 200 for juveniles and it yielded the first win in South Africa for Mauritian jockey, Gaetan Faucon, who brought home the James Lighheart-trained Whistling Wood gelding, Burberry. Burberry is owned by top Mauritius trainer, Serge Henry, who has had a long association as an owner with James Lighheart, and was bred by Avontuur Thoroughbred Farm. Burberry, was claimed at 7-1 for an amount of R25 000 and shortened to 9-2 before drifting out to 8-1 at the off.