

CANON GOLD CUP

The Mike de Kock-trained Ancestral Fore ridden by Kevin Shea ensured that class won the day in the Grade 1 Canon Gold Cup at Greyville over 3200m and by a quirk of fate he became the first three-year-old for 22 years to win the country's premier staying event.

The race was run at a cracking pace set by the Paul Lafferty-trained Sports Factor and Ancestral Fore was able to sit in about seventh place in the running where he travelled comfortably throughout.

De Kock, looking down, was confident from a long way out as he saw the rest of the field beginning to struggle for oxygen from the 1000m mark on while Shea still had a double-handful.

Ancestral Fore moved around the horse in front of him, Predestination, as if he was standing still at about the 600m mark and was set alight at the top of the straight.

The well-balanced grey, who is by Dynasty, quickened immediately and the race was in the bag by the 200m mark.

It was noticeable that due to the fast pace the next seven behind him at the finish, Vertical Takeoff, Predestination, Thanks John, Sangria Girl, Hospitality, Santa and Refined In Fire were all horses without stamina doubts.

Vertical Takeoff coming from some way off the pace chased Ancestral Fore towards the outside and stayed on well for a two length second while Predestination also stayed on resolutely for third, a further 2,25 lengths back.

Thanks John, coming from way back, finished very strongly for fourth.

De Kock said, "I thought if he stayed he would win. There is always a doubt when they haven't gone that far before but if you look at Dynasty's pedigree there is his full-brother Sequoia."

Sequoia won over 3000m and finished second in the Gold Cup.

Shea said, "He is classy. They went at a tremendous gallop, but I had such a handful at the top of the straight that I decided to let him go. He quickened superbly."

Piere Strydom rider of Vertical Takeoff said, "It was a very fast pace, then they eased up a bit. We were caught a bit wide, but he stayed all the way to the line. The winner was just too good, he quickened so well away from me."

Karis Teetan rider of Predestination said, "We followed the winner, but he went away from us. My horse kept on finding and ran a very good race."

Ancestral Fore was bred by Hyjo Stud.

He is owned by Sheik Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Maktoum and will now be heading for Dubai.

The Gold Cup is usually run in the first week of August, after each crop turns a year older, so it has seldom been won by a three-year-old.

However, this year the race was run early due to the staging of the World Cup in South Africa, while it was run on July 30 in 1988 when the Terrence Millard-trained three-year-old Castle Walk won it.

This was the second Gold Cup that de Kock had won, the first being on Thundering Star in 2007.

De Kock also won the Grade 2 Tibouchina Stakes over 1400m with his Irish-bred three-year-old filly Gibraltar Blue, who is owned by Klawervlei Stud and was ridden by Anton Marcus.

Starting odds-on, she got into second place from her wide draw before quickening at the top of the straight to open up a lead and hold on from Autumn Gold and Strawberry Ice.

Gibraltar Blue is six months younger than her contemporaries, being Northern-hemisphere bred, but didn't get an allowance for it, so this was a fine win.

De Kock did not hold back in his praise of the strongly built Rock Of Gibraltar filly.

The Grade 2 Gold Bracelet over 2000m was won by the Mike Bass-trained J&B Met winner River Jetez, who also started odds-on.

She nearly came down shortly after the start.

Jockey Bernard Fayd'herbe said, "I decided to drop her out and I'm not sure if she clipped heels or stumbled but her nose just about touched the ground. She picked herself up well and within three strides was cruising again."

River Jetez stormed through to win impressively.

Precedent flew up from last place to snatch second away from Jet Trail.

Imperious Star led early in the race and stayed on for fourth.

River Jetez was bred by Out Of Africa Stud.

Part-owner Marsh Shirliff was present and said, "I'm not sure whether Bernard is on the right one for the July."

Fayd'herbe will ride her full-brother Pocket Power in the July.

The Listed Thukela Handicap over 1600m saw a thrilling blanket finish with the first 12 horses within 1,65 lengths of the surprise 40-1 winner, the Dominic Zaki-trained bottom weight Fort Petersburg, a three-year-old Fort Wood gelding, who burst through late.

Fort Petersburg, who is entered in the July, is owned by V Haipersad and was bred by Ascot Stud.

POST MERCHANTS

The Darryl Hodgson-trained Casey Cool proved his liking for Greyville when winning the Grade 2 Post Merchants over 1200m although the race didn't pan out as expected and his victory owed a lot to the fine horsemanship of Kevin Shea.

Casey Cool, a strongly built six-year-old gelding by Casey Tibbs, is a difficult customer who even has to work in blinkers and usually needs a few things to go in his favour.

He needs cover as he otherwise doesn't settle and he needs to be held up for as long as possible as he has a short, albeit devastating, run in.

However, the race didn't seem to be panning out for him in the early stages as the Dennis Bosch-trained Noble Heir went to the front and dictated a slow pace.

Casey Cool, breaking from stall eight, was towards the outside of runners and began to fight for his head. His chances would have been gone had it not been for the fine hands of Shea, for the big horse's unruly behaviour was shortlived and instead he was settled in behind the vanguard.

Shea also read it correctly at the top of the straight, deciding not to hang around with the pace having been so slow.

Casey Cool's superb burst of speed saw him wrest the lead halfway down the straight and then put daylight between himself and the pack and it was now just a case of whether he could hang on.

"I was asking myself whether I had gone too early but he was loving it the whole way down the straight," said Shea, who geed him up by making a continual clicking noise. "I was worried they were going to come at me before the line because I didn't want to have to use the whip. But the pace hadn't been strong so a lot of them were left out of their ground and couldn't make it up."

The Joey Ramsden-trained Bush Pirate looked very well handicapped on his run in the Grade 1 Cape Flying Championship and also has a liking for Greyville, so his runner-up position was not as much of a surprise as the place payout of R4,50 suggested.

He came from way back to be narrowly beaten although he did receive 3kg from Casey Cool, who carried 59,5kg, just half-a-kilogram less than

the topweights Gaultier and Thunder Key.

The Sean Tarry-trained Mr Top finished third. He has done well since being kept to sprints, but has appeared to be battling off his current merit rating, so this was a fine effort.

As a handy type he was suited to the slow pace and stayed on resolutely.

The Weiho Marwing-trained Moroccan was slowly away and had to come from near the tail of the field, a tremendous effort considering the false pace from one of the country's most promising sprinters.

Casey Cool is owned by Hassen Adams and was bred by Highflyer Stud.

In the seventh, a Pinnacle Stakes event over 1800m, Shea won very easily on the Mike Bass-trained Super Storm, who advertised his claims for the forthcoming Gold Circle Derby over 2400m at Clairwood on July 3.

Bass had said after Super Storm had won his Durban debut at Clairwood over 1450m that he had always liked this horse and that he had needed that opening run, so a few shrewd punters were not fooled by his merit rating which had left him a bit to do at the weights.

The Vodacom Durban July and Champions Cup entries, Galileo's Galaxy and Aslan, finished second and third respectively although the latter's run is best ignored as he was noticeably stubborn before going down and was then left out of his ground at the top of the straight by Super Storm's charge for home.

Shea made it a quick hattrick in the last on the Patrick Lunn-trained Eliza Maria, a troublesome sort who also benefitted from the top jockey's horsemanship.

Other notable wins came from the Mike de Kock-trained Ilha Grande, who is by Tiger Ridge out of the champion race mare, Ilha Da Vitoria.

She won the second, a maiden over 1300m, with ease.

The Dennis Drier-trained Val De Ra showed her class by sauntering to her sixth victory in seven starts in the sixth, a Conditions Plate over 1000m.

VDJ RUNNERS

The Dean Kannemeyer yard have announced that Noordhoek Flyer will not contest the Vodacom Durban July having not pleased jockey Karl Neisius in the Daily News 2000 on Saturday and having also shown signs of being a little shaken up.

Noordhoek Flyer lost a shoe in the running on and returned a little jarred up.

Neisius felt that "there was nothing there" when he picked Noordhoek Flyer up in the straight and Kannemeyer said that the obvious conclusion was that the horse did not stay "a genuine 2000m at this level."

Kannemeyer said that a more realistic route for the son of Pivotal would now be the Champions Cup over 1800m at Clairwood, before putting him

away until the Cape summer, where his targets would be the L'Ormarins Queen's Plate and the J&B Met.

Kannemeyer felt, however, that Noordhoek Flyer's July dream might just be postponed for a year rather than buried and he cited the example of Over The Air, trained by his father Peter, who was labelled as a miler early in his career, but went on to win the July as a four-year-old.

"Horses can develop stamina as they get older," he said.

Meanwhile the Grade 1 Daily News 2000 winner, the Mike de Kock-trained Irish Flame, is now the ruling July favourite at 7-2, while the runner-up, Bold Silvano, also from the de Kock yard, is second favourite at 5-1.

VDJ RUNNERS (cont)

Irish Flame's sire Dynasty had a great weekend, as another of his sons, the de Kock-trained July entry Ancestral Fore, won the Grade 3 Lonsdale over 2400m.

Dynasty will now have a strong chance of joining King's Favourite, Sadri II and Kipling, as being the only horses to have both won and sired a winner of the July.

Irish Flame proved three things on Saturday, that he could handle Greyville, goes just as well on quick ground as he does in the soft and has enough speed to win over the Greyville 2200m, as he showed an excellent turn of foot at the top of the straight from a handy position.

He also has a similar, if not better, career profile to another former de Kock July winner, Grey's Inn.

Grey's Inn won the Derby by a neck before finishing a three length third in the Daily News.

Bold Silvano's Daily News effort was eyecatching as he came from the tail of the field and made up the deficit effortlessly, but couldn't get past the gallant Irish Flame.

Bold Silvano, by Silvano, was said to be very immature as a young three-year-old by former trainer Gavin Smith and is now rapidly coming into his own under de Kock.

De Kock recently praised the sire Silvano and pointed out his career as a

racehorse, in which he proved himself a tough international campaigner who won on many continents.

He went on to liken Greys Inn as a similar type, so weighing this up one can conclude that Bold Silvano could well fit into the category of horses de Kock best loves to train.

Bold Silvano could well improve past Irish Flame by the time of the big one.

The Mike Miller-trained Jet Master colt Lizarre ran a cracker for third in the Daily News and could provide Miller with his second July runner in succession, a notable feat for a small yard.

He is suited to Greyville and his style of running suggests he should stay the July trip, despite a female line that is full of sprinters and milers.

He could provide KZN's main hope in this year's July along with the Herman Brown-trained Orbison and the Paul Lafferty-trained Goat.

Woolavington winner Imperious Star loved the Greyville 2000m on Saturday and Glen Kotzen's chances of repeating his July win of last year have suddenly increased, especially considering she is a front-running type.

Kotzen has last year's winner, Big City Life, and J&B Met fifth-placed Fabiani still waiting in the wings.

BIG CITY LIFE

Big City Life's win of the Rising Sun Gold Challenge over 1600m at Clairwood looks better and better the more the race is analysed and he will have a good chance of winning the Vodacom Durban July for a second time in succession.

The formbook will show that Glen Kotzen's superstar beat the Mike Bass-trained Blue Tiger by 0,25 lengths, which might not make impressive reading as the latter has never won a Grade 1 and has also never won beyond 1450m.

However, Blue Tiger was one of the few horses in the field who was at his absolute peak and he turned it into a searching test of fitness by setting a blistering gallop from the off.

The high quality field, in which the four-time Grade 1 winner Mother Russia was the lowest rated on 109, ended well strung out with Pocket Power and Smart Banker two lengths back in third and fourth respectively and Rudra a further three lengths back in fifth.

A strung out field is usually a sign of very strong form.

Piere Strydom landed the ride after a last minute scramble to find a replacement for Andrew Fortune, who has decided to take time off to attend a clinic in George, where he will attempt to understand and gain control of the wild fluctuations in his body weight.

The connections started at the top of the tree when looking for a replacement and were fortunate to book Strydom, who is regarded as one of the all time South African greats.

Strydom flew in an hour before the race and flew out again immediately

as he attended the England-USA World Cup match in Rustenberg.

Raymond and Paula Deacon, part-owners of Big City, were enormously impressed with Strydom.

"He is unflappable," said Raymond, "He told us how pleased he was to have landed the ride, then listened to the advice in the parade ring, nodded and went out and rode a brilliant race. Afterwards he had to miss the ceremony as he had to rush back to the airport."

Strydom told the connections that he had been very impressed, especially considering Big City Life had tired late and obviously will have more to come by the time of the July.

Big City Life's victory was the first ever win for a loyal owner of Glen Kotzen's, Sue Whitmore, who is also known as Lady Wragness.

She bought a share in the horse together with Leanne de Jager after the J&B Met.

Whitmore was in England on Saturday, but found somewhere to listen to the race, and recounted to Raymond Deacon how she had astonished all the bystanders by leaping up and down in the middle of a hurdle race.

Another part owner, Glen Mitchell, watched from Cape Town and his excitement was of similar proportions.

A lot of pundits had written off Big City Life as a horse that had not trained on from his brilliant three-year-old career.

"People forget that he received 7kg from Pocket Power in the July," said Kotzen. "In his next start he lost to him by three-quarters of a length

BIG CITY LIFE (cont)

over 1500m at level weights. In the Met he had to come from 28 lengths back at the top of the straight and finished only 3,6 lengths back. That was a great run. People say 'he's back' but we've never thought he was gone."

The July is at a very difficult time for trainers this season as they have to keep their charges going for a month longer than usual.

Most of the horses that were not at their peak were found out by the searching gallop.

Pocket Power began his return appearance to Clairwood by refusing to parade in front of the grandstand.

Bernard Fayd'herbe said, "Normally he allows himself to be led down in front of the stand and as soon as he is let go he whips around and heads for the start. He came out today, heard the music (from the Rising Sun carnival area) and I could feel him saying there's no way I'm going down there. He whipped around and I had to scream to the groom to let him go."

Pocket Power has a unique way of finishing off his races, quickening at the top of the straight, then "hovering" for about 200m or more, before delivering his devastating and famous final kick.

On Saturday he quickened and moved up as menacingly as he usually does, but his final kick failed to materialise.

He showed typical courage in fighting on to snatch third.

Marsh Shirliff was as sporting as he always is in defeat as was Greg Viljoen, owner of Blue Tiger.

The Charles Laird-trained Smart Banker lost his unbeaten record over 1600m, but ran a fine race considering he had run a close third with a Grade 1 penalty in very testing ground just five weeks earlier in the Champion Challenge over 2000m.

Champion Challenge winner Regal Ransom finished a fair 6,8 length sixth considering he probably needed the run.

Rudra was a never threatening fifth over a distance short of his best.

Kapil ran seventh and Stan Elley said he would be meeting this week with the owners to discuss his future.

"He's been a wonderful horse, but retirement might be an option," said Elley.

Big City Life's stable companion Fabiani had bad luck in running, hitting the rail at one stage.

Tropical Empire proved again that he is a far better horse at Greyville.

Mother Russia sweated up very badly in the pre-race parade and displayed nervous antics that left Mike de Kock at a loss to understand.

She trailed in a tailed off last, by far the worst performance of her ultra consistent career.

Kotzen reckoned later that the July would probably be Big City Life's next run.

It will be especially fitting if the handsome Casey Tibbs colt successfully defends his July crown as the day will mark the diamond anniversary (60th) of Milesia Pride's famous second victory and the tenth anniversary of El Picha's double.

WORKFORCE WINS GR1 ENGLISH DERBY 5

Former Darley shuttler King's Best (Kingmambo-Allegretta, by Lombard) added a Gr1 triumph when Prince Khalid Abdulla's Juddmonte Farms home-bred colt Workforce (King's Best-Soviet Moon, by Sadler's Wells) blitzed his rivals by 7-lengths & smashed the course record in the £1.4 million (A\$2.42m) Gr1 English Derby (12 furlongs) for 3YOs at Epsom Downs. Workforce (ridden by Ryan Moore for trainer Sir Michael Stoute)

defeated Ballydoyle's front-running Irish-bred colt At First Sight (Galileo-Healing Music, by Bering) & fellow colt Rewilding (Tiger Hill-Darara, by Top Ville). Workforce (who entered the Derby as the least experienced runner in the race) took his record to 2 wins & a runner-up (in last start's UK Gr2 Dante Stakes over 10.5 furlongs at York on May 13) from 3 starts for £807,346 (A\$1.397m) earnings.

SNOW FAIRY WINS GR1 ENGLISH OAKS

Also in the UK, Irish-bred Snow Fairy (Intikhab-Woodland Dream, by Charnwood Forest) motored home from last-in-running to score by a neck in the £350,000 (A\$606,000) Gr1 English Oaks (12 furlongs) for 3YO fillies at Epsom Downs. Snow Fairy (ridden by Ryan Moore for trainer Ed Dunlop) defeated US-bred Meeznah (Dynaformer-String Quartet, by Sadler's Wells) & fellow Irish-bred Remember When (Danehill Danc-

er-Lagrion, by Diesis). Snow Fairy was a €1,800 (A\$2,600) bargain at the 2008 Tattersalls Ireland Flat Sale. Overall she now has 3 wins (also including May's UK Listed Height Of Fashion Stakes over 10 furlongs at Goodwood) & 3 placings (including 2009's UK Gr3 Prestige Stakes over 7 furlongs at Goodwood) from 8 starts for £246,906 (A\$427,000) earnings.

US 6YO MANDURAH SETS WORLD RECORD FOR TURF MILE

US 6YO gelding Mandurah (A.P.Indy-Morning Pride, by Machiavellian) set a world record for 8 furlongs on turf when he clocked 1min 31.23sec at Monmouth Park in New Jersey for trainer Grant Forster. Mandurah (ridden by Alex Solis) set the record at his 1st attempt on a grass track. He carried 114lbs (52kg) & led all-the-way to score by 8.5-lengths, after recording 22.26sec for the initial 2 furlongs, 44.76sec for the half-mile & 1min 8.13sec for 6 furlongs. The old record for 1 mile on grass belonged

to Mister Light, who ran 1min 31.41sec in January 2005 at Gulfstream Park in Florida as a 6YO carrying 118lbs (54kg). Forster told thoroughbredtimes.com: "It's unbelievable. We bought him as 4YO off Darley with the recommendation from Eoin Harty (trainer) to geld him. He's trained well (in the mornings) but never showed it in the afternoon." Mandurah won 3 races earlier this year at Oaklawn Park in Arkansas.

UNDEFEATED ZENYATTA WINS 17TH SUCCESSIVE RACE IN US

Darley shuttler & Gr1 Dubai World Cup winner Street Cry (Machiavellian-Helen Street, by Troy) added a US Gr1 triumph when undefeated 6YO mare & both 2008-2009 US Champion Older Female Zenyatta (Street Cry-Vertigineux, by Kris S) notched her 17th consecutive victory (to break the winning streaks of legendary US champions Citation & Cigar) & also recorded her 3rd Gr1 triumph since returning from a 4-months spell with a half-length victory in the US\$250,000 Gr1 Vanity Handicap (9 furlongs on all-weather) for fillies & mares at Hollywood Park in California (to also become the 1st horse to win this race 3 times). Zenyatta (ridden by Mike Smith for trainer John Shirreffs) defeated UK-bred 5YO mare St Trinians (Piccolo-Cherrycombe-row, by Classic Cliché) & Brazilian-bred fellow 6YO mare Zardana (Crimson Tide-Dear Filly, by Southern Halo). Kentucky-bred Zenyatta (a US\$60,000 yearling at the 2005 Keeneland September Sale) is a half-sister to multiple Gr1-winner Balance & was unraced as a juvenile. Overall she now boasts 17 wins (also including

April's Gr1 Apple Blossom Invitational Handicap over 9 furlongs at Oaklawn Park & March's Gr1 Santa Margarita Invitational Handicap over 9 furlongs at Santa Anita, plus 2009's Gr1 Breeders' Cup Classic over 10 furlongs at Santa Anita, Gr1 Lady's Secret Stakes over 8.5 furlongs at Santa Anita, Gr1 Clement Hirsch Stakes over 8.5 furlongs at Del Mar, Gr1 Vanity Breeders' Cup Handicap over 9 furlongs at Hollywood Park & Gr2 Milady Handicap over 8.5 furlongs at Hollywood Park, as well as 2008's Gr1 Breeders' Cup Ladies' Classic over 9 furlongs at Santa Anita, Gr1 Lady's Secret Stakes over 8.5 furlongs at Santa Anita, Gr1 Clement Hirsch Stakes over 8.5 furlongs at Del Mar, Gr1 Vanity Breeders' Cup Handicap over 9 furlongs at Hollywood Park, Gr1 Apple Blossom Handicap over 8.5 furlongs at Oaklawn Park, Gr2 Milady Handicap over 8.5 furlongs at Hollywood Park & Gr2 El Encino Stakes over 8.5 furlongs at Santa Anita) from 17 starts for US\$6,074,580 prize-money & is North America's all-time leading female earner.

SINGSPIEL STUD CAREER MAY BE AT END

The stud career of former Darley shuttler & Dubai World Cup winner Singspiel (In The Wings-Glorious Song, by Halo) "may be at an end because of his on-going fertility problems" reported racingpost.com overnight. Singspiel (a Darley stallion since 1998) "was 1st diagnosed with problems in March, when it was hoped his fall in fertility would prove to be temporary". But his fertility has not improved & Darley's director of stallions Sam Bullard confirmed: "Singspiel has been covering mares without any satisfactory results. We will need to be able to give breeders some positive news before the start of next season, if we are to market

him to them & at the moment we don't have any positive news." Singspiel (now 18-years-old) was standing the 2010 season at Dalham Hall Stud in England for £15,000 (A\$26,000). On the track, he won 4 international Gr1 events (the Canadian International, Japan Cup, UK Coronation Cup & UK Juddmonte International Stakes, plus the Dubai World Cup before it was given international Gr1 status). His best progeny include Dubai World Cup winner Moon Ballad & Ascot Gold Cup winner Papineau; in 2009 his Gr1-winners included Dar Re Mi, Eastern Anthem & Hibaayeb.

MUZI YENI

Muzi Yeni has been selected to represent South Africa in the Korean International Jockey Invitational in Seoul on August 21 and 22.

Leading jockeys from America, Australia, Japan, Ireland and Turkey will also take on the Korean jockeys in the four-race series.

Yeni, 23, is enjoying by far his best season and 92 of his near-300 career winners have come this term.

The Durban-born jockey said: "For a young rider like me to be given such an opportunity is great, and to represent South Africa is an honour. I am very much looking forward to it."

Yeni is the fourth rider to represent South Africa in the Korean Invitational. Gerrit Schlechter in 2007 was the first and he came out top in the challenge. Greg Cheyne and Richard Fourie were more recent travellers.

The link with the Korea Racing Authority was pioneered by Western Cape Gold Circle chairman Vidrik Thurling and has resulted in the KRA sponsoring both the KRA Guineas and the KRA Fillies Guineas.

Thurling is asked annually by the KRA to recommend a jockey and this time he consulted National Horseracing Authority director Robert Bloomberg who said: "Muzi is a very good jockey and he has made massive improvement in the past two years. He will make a good impression in Korea and I thought it was time a deserving rider of colour was chosen."

The all-expenses paid Seoul trip can prove lucrative. Jockeys get US\$2,000 a ride, the winner of the series collects a further US\$20,000 and there is also a percentage of the prize money.