

# STEERING CLEAR

Mike de Kock once again rescued South African pride on the international racing stage with a sterling performance from Mubtaahij who played second fiddle to the awesome California Chrome in Saturday's Dubai World Cup. "Mubtaahij deserves a US campaign, he's got a big race in America in him! We may go for the Breeders Cup, but only if California Chrome doesn't pitch. If he goes East, we'll go West!" he chirped.



# California - Still Dreamin'

California Chrome had a quiet Sunday at Meydan Racecourse in the United Arab Emirates a day after his dramatic win in the \$10 million Dubai World Cup. Alan Sherman, assistant trainer to his father, trainer Art Sherman, said in an email that California Chrome "came out of his race great." He won and broke the course record, even though his saddle slipped, creating an awkward situation for jockey Victor Espinoza. The saddle was visibly further down California Chrome's back when he reached the wire than it was at the start.

# America Calls

Alec Laird trained J&B Met winner Smart Call flew to Mauritius on Sunday on the first leg of her journey to America, where she will attempt to emulate her paternal grandmother Banks Hill by winning the Breeders Cup Filly and Mare Turf.

The Mauritzfontein Stud-owned and bred Smart Call is currently rated the joint sixth best thoroughbred racehorse in the world after winning the Met.



# Plum Job

Australian race caller Michael Wrona has been named the new full-time track announcer at Santa Anita Park in the USA. The 49yo, who began his career at age 17 in Australia and has been in America for the last 25 years, has spent the past decade as the announcer for Golden Gate Fields in Northern California. "I'm overjoyed and humbled that Santa Anita is entrusting me with a booth occupied by so few announcers in the track's storied history," said Wrona. He was chosen ahead of other world-class international announcers including Craig Evans of the Singapore Turf Club and Racing UK's David Fitzgerald.

# Gr1 Goodbye

Australian Peter Moody has signed off from his training career with a deeply satisfying and emotional win by Flamberge in the Gr1 William Reid Stakes last Thursday. The meeting was Moody's last before he starts a six-month suspension for a cobalt offence and he has signalled he has no intention to return to training. In a reference to his star Black Caviar, he said: "I had the joy of winning it with a special horse and this little bloke's become pretty special too."

# GOT THE LOT?

Highlands Farm's red hot young sire Pathfork was represented by his third first crop winner when Red Chesnut Road made a cracking winning debut at Scottsville on Sunday. The Highlands bred colt, a R250 000 buy from last year's Suncoast KZN Yearling Sale, was said to be catching pigeons at home and trainer Robbie Hill had him ready. He was fitted with blinkers as he apparently sticks up in his work but scorched home by over 7 lengths after shortening from 8's to 17-10. Is that what they'd call an old-fashioned betting coup?

# Spies' Zack Attack

Last term's Zimbabwe champion trainer Corne Spies has always had a 'boer maak 'n plan' approach and been a fearless innovator in a tough industry. The Gauteng horseman has struck gold with his PE satellite base run by his brother Eric and the team saddled a three timer at Fairview on Easter Monday. This brings their win tally to ten in just over a month - the majority ridden by apprentice Craig Zackey.

# Fighting Cirrus

Cirrus Des Aigles, who was the highest-earning European racehorse ever as well as being among the most popular globetrotters of recent times, has been retired. Trained by Corine Barande-Barbe, Cirrus Des Aigles earned over £6 million in prize-money and won Group 1's in three different countries including the Dubai Sheema Classic, Champion Stakes, Coronation Cup and Prix Ganay. Such was his reputation for toughness and endurance, the ten-year-old earned the nickname 'Fighting Cirrus'.

# A Ceres Invite

Make a day or a long weekend of it and enjoy all that the beautiful Ceres valley has to offer! Boland Stud has issued an invite for you to undertake an excursion to Ceres to view their impressive draft for the BSA National Yearling Sale. The invite stands until 16 April. Eugene Freeman has requested that interested parties contact him on 084 816 3741 or at [eugenefreeman@bolandstud.co.za](mailto:eugenefreeman@bolandstud.co.za).



# Wedding Bells

He may hail from a famous racing family and been labelled 'Basil's son', then 'Anton's nephew' and latterly 'Adam's brother' at various times, but Gold Circle's SA Racing App team member Glenn Marcus can now at last be called 'Nicky's Hubby'. On a special Sunday this past weekend he tied the knot in KZN with the lovely Nicky Neethling - daughter of Babette, Graeme Hawkins' partner. We wish them a long and happy life.