

120th July Anniversary Special

1894

The earliest running was on 21 July 1894 over a mile when it was won by Mr Peter's grey horse Leo Grey, ridden to victory by jockey Shipley.

4

The winningmost jockeys are Tiger Wright, Anthony Delpech and Anton Marcus with 4 each. Wright won on Silver Phantom in 1942, Brookhill in 1947, Milesia Pride in 1949 & Preto's Crown in 1955. Delpech won on Classic Flag in 1988, Greys Inn in 2004, Bold Silvano in 2010 and Igugu in 2011. Marcus won on Dancing Duel in 1993, El Picha in 2000, Dunford in 2005 and Hunting Tower in 2007.

33

The maximum field size was increased in 2003 to 20. This year it is 18. However the biggest July field ever was in 1917, when 33 horses went to the start. On the other hand, the smallest July fields were in 1897 and 1908, when only seven horses ran.

5

Gondolier and Beau Art get the best attendance prize at five runs apiece. In 1983 Gondolier finished second; in 1984 he took fifth place; 1985 was victory at last as a 5 year-old; in 1986 he filled sixth place; and in his last run in the race in 1987 he secured seventh position. Beau Art was 6th in 1977; ran second in 1978; was 5th in 1979; won the race in 1980; and was ran 8th in 1981.

Whatsinaname?



It was known as the Durban Winter Handicap from its inception in 1897. In 1928, it became the Durban July Handicap, but once again reverted to its original name during the war years; from 1943 through 1945. Re-instated as the Durban July Handicap in 1946, the race stuck with this name until 1963, when Rothmans entered the sponsorship arena. The race was known as the Rothmans July Handicap until 1989, when the condition were changed.

Thereafter it was simply known as the Rothmans July. Rothmans was reluctant to end its association with this great race but the new tobacco laws of the country forbade it and the longest running sponsorship of a major sporting event came to an end after its 38th year in 2000. 2001 saw the race being run simply as the Durban July and in 2002 Vodacom announced their powerful association with Africa's Greatest Horseracing Event.

11-10

The shortest priced winning favourite in the 107-year history of the Durban July, was the legendary Sea Cottage. He started at odds of 11-10 in 1967, when getting up on the line to deadheat with Jollify. The finish unquestionably rates as the most exciting ever, with the crowd going mad as the two horses flashed across the line locked together.

6 to 1

The honour of being the longest priced favourite to win is now shared by Dean Kannemeyer's 2006 winner Eyeofthetiger and the 1985 winner Gondolier who both started at 6 to 1.

Gondolier however paid more for a R1 win on the tote - R9.00 vs the R7.40 returned by Eyeofthetiger.

8 to 10

The shortest priced favourite ever was Geoff Woodruff-trained Yard-Arm who seemed unbeatable in 2004 at 8/10. Unfortunately the confidence in Yard-Arm was not to be realised and the weight proved to be his undoing. He finished out of the placings

Can It Be A Grey?

Many punters - especially the once a year variety - go for greys, and in 2008 their ship came home with Dancer's Daughter who held Pocket Power to a sensational dead-heat. Prior to that only four greys had ever won the race. The exquisite Thunder Sky was a popular fancy the year Kerason won, and Bodrum was a beaten favourite in 1985. Only Silver Phantom in 1942, Jamaican Music in 1976 and Jamaican Rumba in 1982, together with Right Prerogative in 1989, have been successful.

Three On The Trot

A breeding feat that probably won't be repeated was when the mare Pauline produced 3 July winners in a row - Apollo in 1901, Chaos in 1902 and Peerless in 1903. That was also the first year that an official time was taken - Henry Nourse's chestnut filly Peerless, a daughter of Pauline, won it in 1 min 42.5 seconds.

13

In an international rugby match the Saturday before the 1960 Durban July Handicap of that year, left wing Hennie van Zyl scored both tries for the Springboks wearing the number 13 jersey and the final score was 13 nil. One week later Left Wing, wearing the number 13 saddlecloth, won the Durban July Handicap.

The Girls - Lucky 13

Peerless, a three-year-old, was the first to take line honours in 1903. Margin won in 1916, Collet in 1922, Eunomea in 1923 and Moosme in 1926. It was not until 1951 that a filly was to win again and this was Gay Jane, in the partnership colours of Dennis Labistour and Miss Molly Reynolds. Migraine scored for the ladies in 1957, Diza scooted home for Frank and Jane Lambert in 1962, and then more than 20 years were to elapse before Tecla Bluff was to score in the colours of Sydney Press, in 1983. The very next year trainer Terrance Millard pulled off the race with a filly again, with Devon Air for the Scott brothers. Then in 2002 it was Ipi Tombe, 2008 Dancer's Daughter dead-heated with Pocket Power and in 2011, Igugu slammed the males.

Barrier Draws

Only seven runners drawn on the extreme outside have managed to win since 1917. They were Kipling in 1940, who was drawn 22; St Pauls in 1946, who was drawn at 20: Beau Art who overcame barrier position 17 and the superstition that four white socks are the kiss of death for a racehorse, to romp home in 1980. In 1991 the imported Flaming Rock started from stall gate 20, and unwound a devastating finish to win by a long head. In 1998 Classic Flag did the impossible when starting from stall gate 18. He came from well off the pace then galloped away from his rivals to post an emphatic win. The three-year-old clocked a new race and course record time in the process. In 2003 Dynasty broke from the extreme outside draw at 20 and, fighting for his head and racing wide in the early stages, after finally settling down he produced an incredible finishing burst in the straight to get up and beat Yard-Arm by nearly a length. In 2012 Pomodoro got up on the line in a driving finish from draw 20.