



Frank Advice?

Owner Leon Frank was interviewed by the tireless (he sure gets around!) Stan Elley after the impressive Black Cat Back had cruised in to shed his maiden at Durbanville on Sunday. The Klawervlei Social Club nominee, and longstanding local owner, gave some interesting advice to other patrons considering punting their horses. "The less you put on, the more you lose when you win," said Frank. If you can unravel that philosophy, you're cleverer than we are.

Voyager Smiles

If Stan Elley is hardworking, nobody can beat recently married Andrew Fortune's work-rate. His travel agent must be smiling all the way to the bank! The legend of the saddle has in the space of seven consecutive days ridden at Durbanville last Wednesday, the Vaal on Thursday, Fairview on Friday, Turffontein on Saturday, back to Durbanville on Sunday, then Flamingo Park the next day. We can only take our hat off to a man who described 26 March 2007 as the 'darkest day of his life' and began his long road back from a drug addiction problem that threatened to derail his career forever.

Diamonds For De Beer

Trainer Coenie de Beer's brave decision to travel all the way to Kimberley on Monday for a modest Pinnacle Stakes stretch for South Africa's highest rated galloper Talktothestars (121) paid off when Lucas Bester rode a cool race to register a tenth career victory for the son of Overlord. Carrying top weight of 61kgs, the 5yo gelding held off a late challenge by Corrie Lensley's One Cool Cat by a head, after he had drifted in the betting. It was a nice result on a tough day at the office.

12 Up

Australia's Horse Of The Year Winx, trained by Chris Waller and ridden by Hugh Bowman, faced only two rivals in Group 1 Ladbrokes Caulfield Stakes over 2000m at the weekend - they proved no match for the mare as she made it 12 wins in a row. The Cox Plate and a showdown

with, among others, Godolphin's Hartnell will provide a stiffer test, but Winx could do little more than win easily against the overmatched pair and Waller is looking forward to the rest of the Spring Carnival.

Beating The Benz?



The revelation of a Stipe who allegedly borrowed a jockey's car for a wedding will place further pressure on the National Horseracing Authority. After the Turffontein objection shocker, the NHA under Lyndon Barends' leadership is working hard to repair its public image and confidence, and potentially improper relationships such as that alleged - however innocent they may be - cannot be seen in a positive light.

REALLY SMART

Alec Laird has not ruled out the Gr1 Filly and Mare Turf on 5 November for Met winner Smart Call. The brilliant Ideal World mare had to be scratched from her intended preparation race, the Gr1 Sun Chariot Stakes, which was run over a mile at her current Newmarket U.K base on October 1. The five-year-old is currently sound. However, the issue which prevented her from lining up in the Sun Chariot was not a bad or "obvious" one, and this makes it difficult for the connections to make a definite decision. Laird said he would proceed cautiously with her, taking it "a little bit at a time." If she comes through fine, a decision will then be made on her Breeder's Cup engagement.

De Cockerel

Mike de Kock, on a trip to Dubai, England and Ireland late last month, was invited to the Director's box at White Hart Lane - and got to see one of the best football matches of the season between Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester City. Mike was invited by Charlie Pegram, a prominent owner in the UK and Ryan Moore's agent Tony 'Bony' Hind, both fanatical Spurs supporters. Another Spurs devotee who cracked the nod was retired jockey Johnny Geroudis, on holiday in the UK. Mike and Johnny had the honour of awarding the Man Of The Match Award to ace midfielder Deli Alli, who scored in Spurs' 2-0 defeat of the log-leaders.



READY TO RUN?

Just a reminder that the CTS Lanzerac Ready To Run Sale will be held this Saturday at 18h00 after Durbanville races. 159 lots are on offer. The gallops will be conducted from 09h30 on Friday.

Sunday's Matchem Stakes winner Captain America is a past graduate of this sale, and the next generation French Navy, Red Ray and Brutal Force are others who may be hidden amongst the catalogue pages this weekend.



Wanted: Buyers!

It is sales time and yet again CTS will be putting on a major show at Durbanville. There are some lovely pedigrees on offer and the gallops are always interesting to watch, writes Joey Ramsden.

I have been quite lucky at the Ready to Run Sales in the past and I think I might have to revert back to my old way of selecting as it has possibly proved more successful. We will have to see but first of all we have to find the buyers! It is sure to be a good, fun couple of days.

Happy Holidays

We have been off air for a while now but it is good to be back. As always, Busman's holiday and having a bit of fun. It is good to see how other people do things, what they are feeding, what new innovations are about and how they actually work. However, it is now time for the serious stuff as the season is upon us. The horse that Andrew Fortune won the Spring Challenge on, Kangaroo Jack, looks a smart type and maybe a new star has arrived in town. He was certainly extremely impressive on Saturday. Our runners ran well.

I am not too disappointed with The Conglomerate and won't be jumping off a bridge quite yet. He has

always been a bit of a slow starter. He had a tricky draw and got nudged a bit so could have finished a bit closer. But he needed the run as, with the dreaded AHS vaccines, we have gone much more quietly with all our horses this year in order to be consistent through the summer season. Provided the horses stay well, we are looking forward to a good season.

Farmyard

In the Ramsden farmyard, our stable sheep have been sheared and the ducks are quacking happily, particularly the drakes. They have the most beautiful green heads at the moment. They are a bit like the horses: when their coats turn, so does their form.

We had the Matchem Stakes down here which has opened up to all ages, for very good reason I am sure. It is a great shame not to see any 3 year olds run as this race was always a very good guide as to where we were with the 3 year olds and possibly some of the 4 year olds.

Under those conditions, it looked tough to run

a 3 year old. It is a funny race and being right at the start of the season is quite tough to keep them going all the way to the end of January without losing form.

The winner, Captain America, looks to have plenty of improvement in him. It was good to see the big horse - and he is a big horse - get back to his best.

The same conditions applied to the Diana Stakes and again no 3 year olds.

It was won by a beautiful Captain Al filly, Captain's Flame, and she looks like she could go on to bigger and better things. Maybe I am a little rude in saying the rest looked more Listed class quality, excluding Brett Crawford's well tried filly, Alexis. We know she is far better than her run suggests.

Nursery Time

Most of our babies are in and they seem to be going the right way.

They have changed shape

since bought at the sales and some are still in the process of changing shape. This is the time of the year which I enjoy the most, watching them grow and develop. Nothing is going quickly enough to have formed any definite opinions - probably a good thing as when people phone up asking for my selections, they are sure to die a slow death waiting for my reply. We still have a couple of youngsters on the farm so will be taking a drive out to see how they are progressing.

We have had some bad luck this past week but these things do happen and hopefully we can all move on.

Springcrocks

While I have been away, plenty of interesting things have been happening on the sporting front. Let's start with the demise of the Springboks.

I know everyone says they will be back but I would hate to think when. I have never been a

great fan of Allister Coetzee as he barely managed to win a thing with Western Province (which used to consist of two thirds of the Springbok side). I think he has an extremely large task ahead of him and even with his arrogance, he is starting to look like a worried man. I wish him well. The students are going crazy. For once in this country, there seems to be consistency all around. I see from this morning's paper that the Stellenbosch students are going on a hunger strike. Could be a number of skinny students in the Stellenbosch area in the weeks to come. Let's hope these issues are resolved soon but once again, our president seems to have his head stuck firmly in the sand.

He brings new meaning to the word 'procrastination'.

To end on a sad note, our last surviving Jack Russell, Heidi, from our Russell dynasty - starting with Granny Annie, Mother Sarah and granddaughter, Heidi - was diagnosed with terminal cancer. It is amazing: what one does not know, does not seem to affect one. Heidi is in fine form and looking at her picture, one would not guess anything was wrong.

She is the most loyal friend and without doubt man's best friend.