

A Magic Fine

Brazilian Joao Moreira was fined HK\$255,000 (R430 000) for causing interference in the tenth race 10 at Sha Tin on Saturday aboard beaten favourite Master Albert - a record for a careless riding charge. Moreira pleaded guilty to allowing Master Albert to 'shift in sharply' passing the 1000m mark. It could have been worse as Stewards allocated the hefty fine in lieu of a three-day riding suspension. Moreira is currently one win short of his record 168 winner total for a Hong Kong season, with three meetings remaining.

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Piere Strydom, riding Captain Splendid, not only lost the R500 000 Gr3 Gold Vase in the boardroom on Saturday on an objection, after a 50/50 duel - but got walloped with a ten day suspension for his efforts. That's quite a turnaround.

Neck & Neck

The Equus Older Female category could be quite an interesting tussle next month after Bela-Bela's scintillating Garden Province Stakes success on Saturday. Her and super sprinter Carry On Alice now have two Gr1 wins each this season.

SAD

The Council of the Thoroughbred Breeders Association Of Zimbabwe have taken the decision to formally close the association. According to reports, they no longer have a viable breeding industry in Zimbabwe and thus see little point in maintaining an office. July winner and international star Ipi Tombe remains one of the best to have come out of Zimbabwe.

WHILE IN HONG KONG...

Pari-mutuel wagering dominates in Hong Kong - but that is not in competition with fixed odds! Recently released figures show that football betting looks likely to soon outstrip racing turnover at the Hong Kong Jockey Club. That should be yet another wake up call for horseracing administrators.



Queen Of The Saddle

Britain's most successful female jockey Hayley Turner turned what is expected to be a brief comeback into an immediate success when riding Flying Sparkle to victory at Windsor on Monday night. The 34-year-old, who retired at the end of 2015 and is now principally employed as a broadcaster, seems to have some trouble staying out of the saddle and is back in action for the second consecutive summer. Her appearance at Windsor was supposedly just a warm-up before her participation in the inaugural Lady Jockeys' Thoroughbred World Championship, which was held near Stockholm on Tuesday night.

Bay Watch

One of the most popular horses to race in the Cape in recent years has been retired to a life of luxury at the Equine - Librium Animal Therapy Clinic in Plettenberg Bay. The 8yo Nysaeen gelding Blarney Bay won 9 races in a career spanning five years and three trainers. Blarney Bay was a two time winner when he was relocated to Mike Robinson after his former conditioner Stephen Page moved to Australia in 2014. Owned and bred by Peter De Beyer and Gill Dempsey, the gelding boasted a victory over superstar Captain America and knew only one way to race - from the front. He won 1 race for Sharon Kotzen at Fairview in January. He was the only horse we know who had to be hooded once he was in the stalls! Part-owner Gill Dempsey lives in Plett and will be monitoring Blarney's next career. "He may want to jump or do dressage. That's up to him," she said.



Lekker Bekker

The 45 year Jannie Bekker, who made a comeback after 9 years away from race-riding on the 2017 Easter Weekend, rode his first winner back at Kenilworth on Tuesday. Bekker partnered the fancied Apollo Star for trainer Joey Ramsden and staunch patrons Gisela Burg and Martin Wickens. Piet Botha, another veteran who made his comeback at the same time as Bekker, has already been amongst the winners.

BETTING IN AUSTRALIA...

The untangling of agreements and red tape is one of the mountains in the path of a national tote and national pools in Australia. Former Phumelela man and current Tabcorp chairman David Attenborough is the guy in the hot seat. Pari-mutuel wagering has been on the decline in Australia due to the entry of corporate bookmakers and the tidal wave that has been their marketing. The bookies have successfully shifted many Aussie punters to a fixed-odds mindset; a transition that would appear difficult to reverse. Today's punters are better educated and more price-sensitive than ever, increasingly viewing their betting through more of an investment lens.

Dazzling



The 2003 July winner Dynasty, sire of Saturday's Garden Province stakes winner Bela-Bela, has had another big season, with his nine individual black type winners landing no fewer than 16 black type races in 2016-2017, including the Gr1 Woolavington 2000, Gr1 World Sports Betting Cape Fillies Guineas, Gr2 Wilgerbosdrift Gauteng Fillies Guineas, and his son African Night Sky landing all three legs of the Cape's Winter Series - sponsored by his home-base, Highlands, Part Of Ridgmont.