

20282

Who said good horses don't get folk on to the racetracks? Almost 20 282 racegoers, almost double the 11 100 at the same race last year, turned up at Flemington last Saturday to watch Winx romp to her 21st consecutive win.

Lighting The Fires

It was interesting to read journalist Michael Clower's observation of Durbanville on Saturday. The newly revamped track hosted a Gr3 double feature. He writes that many of the huge crowd seemed more interested in the braais than the racing, but that it was the largest Durbanville attendance in his near 12 years in this country. He continues that some can remember the days when even a Wednesday meeting attracted 5 000 people, but that Justin Snaith said: "It was the biggest I've seen here since I rode at the Cape Hunt amateur meeting 20 years ago." Now imagine if they marketed it.

CHESTNUT CHAMP



The late great SA Triple Crown winner Horse Chestnut continues to make waves as a broodmare sire around the world and Saturday heralded his fifth Gr1 winner as a damsire when Zipessa (City Zip) won the Gr1 First Lady Stakes at Keeneland. A tilt at the Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf could be on the cards for Zipessa.

Slack

The racing operators harp on with officials, jockeys and trainers about sticking religiously to race-times for the sake of international schedules. But ten minutes past the first race start time at Greyville on Friday we were being entertained to a tractor pulling the starting stalls. Then at Flamingo Park on Monday, the head-on camera and cabling issues delayed the start of the first for ages. In both cases the horses were despatched to the start. So it speaks of an apparent lack of diligence and care. We haven't seen any press releases. But that's nothing new.

The Best

Legal Eagle and Marinaresco, both in 34th place, are the leading South African horses in the eighth edition of the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings for 2017. While Arrogate (134) is still top of the charts, with Winx (132) second, Enable (128) is third as a result of her dominant performance in the Gr1 Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe just under a fortnight ago.



107

Former KZN-based trainer David Payne saddled his 107th Gr1 winner at Randwick on Saturday when Tye Angland produced a brilliant, frontrunning ride to guide Ace High to win the A\$500 000 Moet & Chandon Spring Champion Stakes before a bumper crowd of 17 757. Payne went to A\$130 000 to secure the athletic High Chaparral yearling at Magic Millions. The Victoria Derby is next on the agenda.

Polo Pony

Described by Frankie Dettori as a 'filly of a lifetime', the John Gosden-trained five-time Gr1 winner Enable (Nathaniel) will stay in training another year and bid to win the Arc again. Dettori said: "I'm delighted with the news and very grateful to Prince Khalid. I went to see her and gave her a few Polos and she said hello back!"

Laterally Thinking

The Lateral gelding Dawn Raid, who finished fourth behind Lineker in the 2015 BSA Ready To Run Cup, registered his first feature success at the Champ de Mars on Saturday when he won the Gr2 The 175th Anniversary Cup for trainer Gilbert Rousset and jockey Rye Joorawon. It was Dawn Raid's 6th win on the island.

The Crawl Guy?

Apprentice Brandon May was the fall guy for the lack of pace in the Durbanville third on Saturday. Riding Libra, he was charged with a contravention of Rule 62.2.7, in that he failed to maintain a reasonable pace in the early stages. He signed an admission of guilt for the penalty of a warning.

CLIMBING EVEREST



Jamie Spencer has been confirmed as the rider of Brave Smash in the world's richest race on turf, the A\$10 million The Everest at Royal Randwick on Saturday. Spencer, who has been champion jockey in Ireland and Britain, has more than 2000 flat winners in Britain and more than 20 Gr1 wins to his name, including the 2013 Longines Mackinnon Stakes in Melbourne on Side Glance, along with other Gr1 races in Britain, Ireland, the United States, UAE, France and Singapore.