

## A Hiding

The R5000 fine meted out to jockey Randall Simons by the NHA for striking Mike de Kock filly Ghaalla more than three times on consecutive strides, and thus contravening Rule 58.10.2 (read with Guideline C on the use of the crop), when winning the Gr3 Fillies Mile on 24 November, seems a bit harsh – despite the recent publicity over the use of the crop.

## Baby Boom

The first juvenile races of the new season were run at Kenilworth and Scottsville on Saturday and Sunday respectively. What A Winter filly Chilly Winter won the Kenilworth 900m contest for Paul Reeves, while Pomodoro son Bound By Duty scored easily over 800m at Scottsville for Mike Miller.



## A Final Tune

Plans for the Pegasus and Dubai World Cup are off after Aidan O'Brien has lost Mendelssohn (Scat Daddy) to the breeding sheds after his commercial appeal for US breeders prompted Coolmore to bring forward his retirement. After his devastating UAE Derby triumph at Meydan in March, Mendelssohn emerged as a leading Kentucky Derby contender, but his chance in the Churchill Downs Classic was spoiled by the deluge that rendered the dirt track conditions especially challenging. A tilt at the Pegasus World Cup in January was on the agenda, but once the decision was made in Coolmore not to race on next year he was pointed at the Cigar Mile at Aqueduct on Saturday. He ran fourth.

## WINX IS TOPS

Australia's superstar mare Winx (Aus) has been voted the 2018 Secretariat Vox Populi Award winner in a year-end online poll of racing fans. Created by Secretariat's owner Penny Chenery, the award annually recognizes the horse whose popularity and racing excellence best resounded with the general public and gained recognition for Thoroughbred racing. Winx was the top choice among U.S. voters, as well as international fans representing a record 60 countries.

## In The Hood

Last year's Dingaans and Gauteng Guineas winner Monks Hood arrived in Hong Kong a week ago after an incredible journey which, thanks to our export protocols, takes many months. Trained here by KwaZulu-Natal-based Alistair Gordon, Monks Hood is now with Tony Millard, who recently also took charge of Daily News winner Edict Of Nantes (Northern Superstar).

## Fradd In 5th

The annual Mauritius International Jockeys Weekend concluded at the Champ de Mars on Sunday with the duo of Maxime Guyon (pictured) and trainer Amar Sewdyal winning their categories. Frenchman Guyon rode a hat-trick on Saturday. Nooresh Juglall was in fourth, with last year's Champion Robbie Fradd representing SA, and finishing in fifth.



## 20/20 Vision

Lammerskraal's Grand Slam son Visionaire produced his second consecutive Gr2 Merchants winner at Turffontein on Saturday, courtesy of Africa Rising. He sired The Thinker to win the 2017 renewal. He has three lots on January's Cape Premier Yearling Sale.



## ANOTHER ROCKET?

Singapore trainer Stephen Gray says sprinting sensation Lim's Cruiser is the best horse the city state has seen since Rocket Man wowed punters eight years ago. His speedster will be the pride of the Lion City when he lines up in the Gr1 Longines Hong Kong Sprint over 1200m on Sunday.

## Joint Call

The move by Alistair Cohen and Nico Kritsiotis to share the commentary for the Listed Racing Association Handicap run over 3200m on Summer Cup Day was a nice touch and worked very well. Maybe it's time to get a professional caller and an amateur sharing a race once a week? With 40 runners negotiating 30 fences over more than four miles, the Grand National usually has more than one commentator calling it.

## Well Deserved

There was plenty to celebrate at the always festive KZN Breeder's Awards held at Fordoun in Nottingham Road on Saturday. And particularly that of a special achievement award for new breeder, Nothemba Mlonzi, whose first two runners both won in their first racing season. Master Keys gave Nathan Kotzen his first winner as a trainer when scoring on debut and Galaxy Tunes also won on debut for Mark Dixon. Nothemba owns a farm in the Midlands where she had been growing tomatoes - but now owns six mares and has also bought a share in the exciting new Maine Chance Farms-based Dubawi stallion, Erupt.