



Met Master

Candice Bass-Robinson is yet to win the Met and has two longshots in Majestic Mozart and More Magic representing her on Saturday. What a fairytale if she could do it and give her Dad Mike Bass a memorable early 75th birthday gift for Sunday. Mike, the leading Met trainer of the new millennium, won with Bunter Barlow ridden by Glen Hatt in 2001, and then four times on the trot from 2007 to 2010. Pocket Power won three of those and his sister River Jetez, again with Hatt up, won in 2010.

Fancy A Favourite?

Eight-times SA champion trainer Mike de Kock saddled the last favourite to win the Met – that was the champion filly Igugu all the way back in 2012. The pressure is back on ‘Magic’ Mike on Saturday – Hawwaam carries the favourite mantle.

PICK A TRAINER

Mike de Kock and Brett Crawford are the winningmost Met trainers in the class of 2020 with three winners each. Vaughan Marshall, who saddles One World, has won it twice – he is also the ‘oldest’ of the winning group – La Fabulous having scored in 1996. Justin Snaith and Eric Sands have one Met winner each on their cv’s – and are the two most recent winners.

JUMP A JOCK

Only five of the fourteen jockeys riding on Saturday have won the Met previously. Anton Marcus (Hawwaam) and Bernard Fayd’Herbe (Bunker Hunt) have ridden three winners while Piere Strydom (Head Honcho), Greg Cheyne (More Magic) and Aldo Domeyer (Twist Of Fate) have each won it once.

Aussie Rules?

Australian-bred gallopers have won the Met three times in the past eight renewals – Igugu (2012), Whisky Baron (2017) and Oh Susanna (2018). The Aussies have only one representative on Saturday in the shape of Pierró’s son Roy Had Enough. Frank Robinson’s runner also carries the sole KZN flag. He was a A\$95,000 Magic Millions purchase.

Owning Up

Sabine Plattner, Bernard Kantor and Suzanne Hattingh of Chrigror Stud each have two runners on Saturday. Mrs Plattner won it previously with Martial Eagle (2013) and Angus (2003). Piere Strydom rode the latter, and he wears the famous Plattner flag again – this time on Head Honcho on Saturday.



What’s It Cost?

Do you have to spend money to buy a Met runner? Not really, it seems. Of those that went through a sales ring, Do It Again was the priciest with his NYS tag of R1,1 million. On the bright side he has already banked R8,4 million. The ‘cheapie’ is Twist Of Fate, who cost all of R20 000 off the CTS Yearling Sale. He’s earned R3 175 000.



World Class

Mauritzfontein’s Kingmambo sire Ideal World has the best Met strike rate in recent times of local sires. He sired Smart Call (2016) and Rainbow Bridge (2019). The latter bids for the double on Saturday. Sires with past winners and 2020 representatives include Captain Al, who sired Hill Fifty Four (2014). He has three runners. Dynasty produced Futura to win in 2015 and he also has three flagbearers. Silvano has high hopes for Hawwaam to give him another after Martial Eagle (2013). Jet Master has five Met winners to his name – his son Master Of My Fate has Twist Of Fate on Saturday.

Paddock Power

Only two breeders are represented by more than one runner on Saturday. Wilgerbosdrift & Mauritzfontein have the half-brothers Rainbow Bridge and Hawwaam, while Ridgemont Highlands will be shouting for Eyes Wide Open and More Magic.

Sex?

Four members of the fairer sex have won the Met in the 21st century. They are sadly not represented in Saturday’s field. Interestingly, given the fact that they have avoided the unkindest cut of all, six of the fourteen runners are potential stallions.

Smart Alec?

Some trivia to impress your guests if the conversation dries up on Saturday. What do Alec Laird, Yogas Govender, Sean Tarry and Geoff Woodruff have in common? They are past winners of this race in the 21st century who are still training – but have no runner on Saturday.