

# Fashionistas On Front Line

## L'Ormarins Queen's Plate

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A sea of blue and white engulfed the Kenilworth Race Course this past weekend as guests settled in on a balmy summer's day to enjoy the 2020 edition of the L'Ormarins Queen's Plate Racing Festival. Due to its emphasis on style and sophistication, the distinctive social gathering has become the event to be seen at.

Having begun in 1861, the LQP now enjoys pride of place as the oldest horse race in South Africa.

The sartorial standard for the event was set by fashion icon Queen Victoria, whose influence was such that when she wore a white wedding dress to marry Prince Albert in 1840, she sparked a tradition that is still followed around the world today. For years thereafter, the items she chose to wear to races and events at home trickled down to the races in Cape Town where her looks were closely imitated.

Fast forward to the year 2020 and fashion has evolved significantly since then. Although the annual dress code has remained a smart blue and white look to match the event's signature colours, it is still open enough to interpretation that one has no idea just what they will see on the day.

Among the over 7000 visitors who hit the race course over the LQP's two-day festival were famous faces such as Luthando "Loot Love" Shosha, Liezl van Der Westerhuizen, Kamo Modisakeng, Jeannie D, Nambitha Ben-Mazwi, Da Les, Nandi Mbatha and professional rugby player Faf de Klerk. Most of the female celebrities seemed to opt for an old-hollywood glamour vibe with their hair and make up while choosing to be a little more daring and modern with their outfits.

Modisakeng was undoubtedly the best dressed in her structured baby blue, asymmetrical Quiteria Atelier cocktail dress. Her fellow Quiteria Atelier muse, Nandi Mbatha, left much to be desired, however, with her ice-queen look featuring a similar fabric to that used for Modisakeng's dress.

Shosha once again opted for her signature pant-suit look, this time giving it a softer interpretation with lighter fabrics, however, her outfit photographed better than it looked in person. The difference in materials throughout her outfit made it look less cohesive in person, however, her flawless hair and makeup more than made up for it.

Shosha, who is known for her faux-locs and shortly-cropped natural hairstyles dazzled fans by switching things up and wearing a lace wig for the first time.

"I saw a picture and I was like this is it, this is what I'm doing and I think it's really healthy to just do what you want. I'm kind of re-figuring out who I am because I think having kids kind of just reconfigures everything."

"... and I just really wanted a different hairstyle. I was tired of the locs. Oh my God. They're long, they're a lot of work and though they're not too heavy, it was just like 'okay, I'm over this. Let me do something interesting.'"

She said the response to her new look has been overwhelmingly positive but she owes that to the professionalism of her hairstylist and her photographer who captured the look perfectly. In addition to the hair, Shosha said she opted for the fabrics that she did because she has found herself feeling more feminine since becoming a mother. As such, she wanted to show off that side of herself and turned to LawrenSon Junior of LSJ Designs to do so.

“I wanted to feel like a feather, and a fascinator, very light and very chilled and very relaxed but I still wanted a suit so I played around and we came up with this. Pleats are a thing in my life right now. I love them, I’m obsessed so we incorporated them in the suit.”

All these looks were paraded around the Style Village which formed part of the event’s curated lifestyle attractions alongside a Beauty Bar, vintage car display featuring a R4 million valued Bugatti and the LQP carousel installation.

The event’s organisers value style so much that they reward it and this year’s Best Dressed & Best Hat competitions saw Zinzi Ntoyiwa, Charles Samuels and Roxy Joubert walk away with luxury prizes.

Attendees were then treated to the Cape Minstrels’ parade which featured a colorful display of cultural heritage in a kaleidoscope of color and joyful singing to introduce to the main race.

With its reworked layout and playful short-format race card set to jazz, Saturday’s card kept race-goers enthralled as South Africa’s finest horsemen and their equines battled for glory in an unparalleled day of racing.

It showcased the exciting L’Ormarins Queen’s Plate and Cartier Paddock Stakes (Grade 1), the only South African race which allows winners entry into the elite Breeders’ Cup Mile in the USA, as well as the Glorious Goodwood Peninsula Handicap (Grade 2).

Vardy, along with jockey Craig Zackey, took the R1.5 million L’Ormarins Queen’s Plate (Grade 1) purse as enthralled racegoers stood field-side to witness the showdown that saw the team beat the country’s 10 best horses and jockeys.

Thanks to a stunning performance, Vardy became his sire Var’s tenth individual Gr1 winner. After the races concluded, guests made their way to the legendary on-site LQP after-party under the skillful direction of SA Hip Hop Awards DJ of the year: DJ pH and the DJ’s from Roastin’ Records.

The renowned DJ pH returned to take the LQP Racing Festival after party to new heights for the fourth year in a row.

His inclusion in the event is a testament to the democratization of horse racing events, which have always been seen as a very prestigious and almost stiff type of event given their links to old money.

“People want to party! Once the formalities of the event are out of the way just want to party. Hip hop as a genre has dominated for years and when it comes to unwinding, people just want to enjoy the genre,” said pH when asked about how his sound fits into the atmosphere of such an after party.

Thanks to the skillful mastery of the event organisers, guests were transported from the Kenilworth racecourse to an exclusive night club without even having to get into their cars. Although the current atmosphere of the racing festival is a great departure from its roots, it is certainly an evolution that the event’s organisers can be proud of.