

October 6, 2010

EBONY FLYER “ARRIVES” IN SENSATIONAL GRADE 2 CAPE TOWN TRIUMPH, FILLY CANTERS HOME EASED UP BY 5 ½ LENGTHS IN ODESSA STUD STAKES, SUPER STAR FIGURES TO BE A SHORT PRICE FOR G1 CAPE FILLIES GUINEAS



Ebony Flyer, who was making only the third start of her career, won the Grade 2 Odessa Stud Fillies Championship in such devastating fashion that the handicapper for The Jockey Club in South Africa increased her Merit Rating from 85 to 106, putting her 5 pounds clear of the next best 3-year-old filly on the continent. “We consider her to be the best we’ve seen from this current crop of 3-year-old fillies,” the head handicapper told Barry Irwin. The 106 puts her behind only 5 colts from her generation and within 3 pounds of the top-rated 3-year-old colt in the land.”



Ebony Flyer’s athleticism belies her 17 hands 1 inch size. Although stuck outside in the starting stalls, she was soon up with the leaders and drew off to score handily.

How dominating was her performance? Well, Irwin received a call from perhaps the leading light in South African racing, who said “I wouldn’t waste my time running her next in the (Grade 1 Cape Fillies) Guineas. I’d skip that and go right after the top older males in South Africa in the (Grade 1) Queen’s Plate. She’s good enough to take on any horse in the country and beat them. That’s my opinion.” The fellow was not speaking through his hat, because in a matter of hours he had produced an offer to buy a substantial interest in the filly for one of the most prominent owners in South Africa.

Barry Irwin had rated Ebony Flyer at 107 as compared with the 85 Merit Rating assigned by The Jockey Club’s top handicapper. After the race she was elevated to 106 and Irwin had her at 110. “She is at 110 for sure, because she beat a 95 Merit Rated filly by 5 ½ lengths, with many pounds in hand, and on raw numbers that is 110 in any man’s book.” Ebony Flyer is now rated 2 pounds superior to her half-sister Captain’s Lover, who was the top-rated filly of her generation, following wins in the Odessa and the Cape Fillies Guineas. Irwin said “Captain’s Lover had a lot of temperament and it got in the way of her performances. Ebony Flyer is just the opposite. She’s a pet around the barn and a willing participant in the afternoon.”

Ebony Flyer went off as the 2 to 1 favorite, because Justin Snaith had named Felix Coetzee on another filly, which gamblers interpreted as a knock against Ebony Flyer. *Insiders’ Bulletin* readers knew the real skinny, which was that Coetzee was never offered the mount, as he was just back from surgery and would not be available to ride the filly back in the Guineas, so Snaith went to veteran Bernard Fayd’herbe.

The story of the race was just as predicted by Justin Snaith, who said, in essence, that the only thing that could stop Ebony Flyer from winning was her wide-out draw. She loaded like a lamb, which was different, broke well, settled into her long, flowing stride easily, was taken up 3 wide to assume a stalking position in third around the turn, continued wide around the turn and came into the lane looking like a raptor sizing up its prey.



Fayd'herbe eyes Empress Club's Hall of Fame memorabilia. She was raced by the former owner of Secret Heart (Pluck's dam) and won the Queen's Plate at 3 over top older males.

Fayd'herbe said "I threw the reins at her entering the straight to get her to relax, then I picked her up and squeezed on her just a little bit. She dropped low, accelerated and took off with me. What a feeling! Barry, I never call owners, but I had to tell you that I could have won by a city block. This filly is just unbelievable. She is a Champion."

Ebony Flyer opened up half a dozen lengths on her field in the blink of an eye and Fayd'herbe began to ease her 100 yards from home, as he patted her a couple of times on the neck.

The Jet Master filly out the Team Valor International broodmare Sunshine Lover was making only the third start of her life. She blitzed her field in her straightaway debut at Kenilworth, beating a half-sister to none other than a half-sister to the dam of Pluck. Then she smoked a representative field out of town in Port Elizabeth in the Lady Slipper Stakes, again winning eased up.

Ebony Flyer did not see a race course again until last Saturday, because racing at Kenilworth had to be temporarily suspended when the track superintendent could not get the course in good enough shape to hold the meeting that included the Grade 3 Diana. When she drew the outside stall for the Odessa, Snaith wanted to hang himself, but he had such confidence in the filly, he led her over in spite of the dreaded number 13 stall.

Next stop is the December 4 renewal of the Grade 1 Cape Fillies Guineas, which figures to have a smaller field than normal, as Ebony Flyer will be an odds-on favorite. Barry Irwin will lead a contingent of Team Valor partners to Cape Town for the Guineas.

The filly had been acquired by her current owners in two ways. First, she was included in a package that included her mother when TVI bought them when Ebony Flyer was a young suckling. That group put her in the National Yearling Sale, where Irwin loved her so much he bought her for his own account. As is his custom, he allowed any of the partners to remain and sold some new interests to another completely different group of owners. All in all there are 31 owners of Ebony Flyer, with interests ranging from 15 percent to as little as a third of 1 percent

Irwin said "If the sale is consummated, our partnerships are in wonderful shape and we won't ever look back. Some of the partners naturally were reluctant to sell, but they are getting their cake and eating it to, and to me, this is the way the game has to be played."

From *Racingweb.com* in South Africa comes the following:

A CLEAN SWEEP FOR TEAM VALOR INTERNATIONAL AND ITS PARTNERS

By Charl Pretorious



Barry Irwin's Team Valor International enjoyed an extraordinary good Saturday, even by its high standards. TVI, in partnership with Anant and Vanashree Singh, won the Grade 3 Starling Stakes at Turffontein with Success Counts and the Grade 2 Odessa Stud Championship at Kenilworth with Ebony Flyer (headline photo).

To top it all, TVI and partners won the \$US1 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf over 1600m at Churchill Downs in Kentucky, USA, with Pluck, who came from last.



All three victories were impressive, but Irwin will be particularly excited about Ebony Flyer, a big, smooth-striding filly by Jet Master who turned the Odessa Championship into a procession, winning by 5.50-lengths, not near extended.

Ebony Flyer's trainer Justin Snaith described this half-sister to TVI's international stakes winner Captain's Lover as "mindblowing". He said: "She is simply unbelievable. I've trained some top fillies, she rates right up there. We may go for the Fillies Guineas, but I'm not sure how long she will stay in this country. I hope I can be the one to take her overseas."

Jockey Bernard Fayd'Herbe shared Snaith excitement, saying: "I told Justin before the race that I didn't want to bustle her from a wide draw, but she did everything easily. She was on the heels of then leaders, going at half-pace, and when I gave her a squeeze and a tap she made up her ground quickly and it was over. She is very impressive!"

Apprentice Nooresh Juglall rode his first Graded winner on R600 000 purchase Success Counts, by Count Du Bois. Sharon Strydom, assistant to trainer Ormond Ferraris, said: "She was an expensive filly, but Team Valor's going to have a lot of fun with her."

The Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf race was marred by Rough Sailing, ridden by Anna Napravnik, stumbling on the first turn. The others were able to avoid the fallen jockey, who gingerly walked off the track. Starting from the outside No. 13 post, Pluck finished the mile on the firm grass course in 1:36.98, a length ahead of runner-up Soldat, with Alan Garcia riding, sent off as the 4-1 second betting choice.

The accident also forced Pluck's jockey Garret Gomez to do a quick dodge to avoid complicating the situation, not long after leaving the gate with a big stumble of his own.

"He stumbled badly at the start and had to maneuver (around) a fallen rider," said trainer Todd Pletcher. "At that point, you're just kind of hoping you can regroup and hit the board."

"He really exploded down the lane." According to Gomez, "He did everything really good. I mean, he overcame a lot. He stumbled to his nose leaving the gate."

From Gold Circle's website comes the following:

EBONY FLYER LOOKS LIKE STAR IN THE MAKING IN GRADE 2 ODESSA STUD STAKES

By Michael Clower and David Thistleton



Ebony Flyer lived up to her name with a truly devastating performance in the Odessa Stud Championship at Kenilworth on Saturday. The dark bay seems sure to start a short-priced favourite for the Avontuur Estate Cape Fillies Guineas on December 4 and Justin Snaith is already talking about an international campaign. This unbeaten giant of a filly towered over her rivals in the parade ring - she is 17,1 hands and at 556kg she was between ten and 20% heavier than her opponents - and it was the same story in the race.

Bernard Fayd'herbe and Justin Snaith combined for G2 Odessa score.

Drawn on the wide outside, Bernard Fayd'Herbe had resigned himself to racing three wide but she broke so fast that he was able to move across "and within three strides I was sitting second." The 2-1 favourite was just as quick when he wanted to make his move - "I squeezed her, gave her a little tap and she ran away from them."

Indeed she drew further and further away to slam smart stable companion Emerald Cove by five and a half lengths with her rider doing no more than pat her neck in appreciation. Snaith, winning the Grade 2 for the third time in four seasons, said: "This filly is mind-blowing and her work at home is incredible. Ten days ago she gave five kilos to Grade 1-performing five-year-old Dance With Al.

"After the summer season Durban is not an option - I would rather go to Jo'burg - and I will recommend that she goes overseas. I just hope I am going to be the one to take her. I was also impressed with Emerald Cove because we've had a few problems with her and she will go for the Fillies Guineas as well."

The Jet Master-sired winner was bred by Willem Englebrecht and was bought by Barry Irwin (in partnership with Vanashree and Anant Singh) for R700 000 at the National Sale, largely because she is a half-sister to Captain's Lover who won the 2007 Odessa and Fillies Guineas for them.

Justin Snaith's dominance of the Grade 2 Odessa Stud Championship continued when the highly impressive Ebony Flyer flew home to a facile win under Bernard Fayd'herbe with stablemate Emerald Cove finishing second. Snaith's record in this 1 400m race over the last four years has now been win, shorthed-second, win, win.

Ebony Flyer, by Jet Master and a half-sister to 2007 Odessa winner, Captain's Lover, overcame her disadvantage of being widest drawn of the 13 runners with ease and remains unbeaten in three starts. She is a huge 17 hands one inch, but relaxed very well in the running, and after a fair start Fayd'herbe simply used her huge stride to move her from a midfield position to a handy one around the outside of horses. She turned for home at the top of the 450m straight in third place about two lengths off the pacesetter, her stablemate Fragrant Al. Fayd'herbe asked her for her effort and she hit the front at the 300m mark before powering clear to win by 5,5 lengths from Emerald Cove, the Yogas Govender-trained School Captain and the Joey Ramsden-trained In Like Flynn. It was Fayd'herbe's fourth winner of the day.

From *Racing South Africa* comes the following:

ODESSA STUD FILLIES CHAMPIONSHIP

By Ada van der Bert



Racegoers witnessed a potential superstar in the making when Justin Snaith's unbeaten Ebony Flyer returned from a lengthy rest and put up an eye-popping performance which saw her crush her opponents by a street. Quickly overcoming her wide 14 draw, the strapping bay settled in third and merely bided her time, racing within striking distance of pacesetter Fragrant Al. At the furlong mark, she delivered the killer blow and it was race over. Striding out in impressive fashion, she powered home to win unextended, keeping her flawless record intact. Almost six lengths back, stable companion Emerald Cove and School Captain engaged in a battle royale for second, with the former prevailing by a head.

This was the winner's first start since she outclassed her field in the Listed Lady's Slipper at Arlington in June. Now unbeaten in three starts, she obviously ranks as a serious contender for next month's Gr.1 Avontuur Estate Cape Fillies Guineas. The Team Valor colour bearer certainly has the right credentials, being a half-sister to champion Captain's Lover (Captain Al) who won this race in the same colours for Snaith in 2007 as a prelude to her Gr.1 victory in the Fillies Guineas and a successful international campaign.

In fact, Ebony Flyer joins Captain's Lover and last year's victress Townsend (also by Captain Al) as Snaith's third Odessa winner in four years. Only Mother Russia's shorthand defeat of Sparkling Gem in 2008 prevented the stable from making it a perfect four-way streak. Ebony Flyer is the third foal and second graded stakes winner out of modest one-time winner Sunshine Lover, who was purchased privately by Team Valor with Ebony Flyer at foot. Grandam Miss Bikini is a half-sister to Maid Of Siberia (dam of Gr.3 Diana winner Joshlin) and to Mexican Dream (grandam of Gr.3 Matchem Stakes victress Joshua's Dream).

What price Sunshine Lover's yearling full brother to Captain's Lover, who is due to tour the ring at the inaugural Cape Premier Yearling Sale in January?

From *Tabonline.com* comes the following:

EBONY FLYER TOPS BRILLIANT DAY FOR TEAM VALOR INTERNATIONAL

By Jack Milner



Team Valor had a day to remember on Saturday as they won 3 Graded races in 3 different centres. Their first victory saw Ebony Flyer win the Grade 2 Odessa Stud Championship over 1400m at Kenilworth, and soon after that Success Counts captured the Grade 3 Starling Stakes over the same distance at Turffontein.

However, Team Valor nominee Barry Irwin was in the USA at the Breeders' Cup meeting where their two-year-old Pluck won the Grade 2 Breeders' Cup Juvenile over 1600m. Jockey Garrett Gomez, who had left the course in an ambulance on Thursday, came within inches of being felled again on the Churchill Downs turf when Rough Sailing lost his hind legs on the first turn and slipped to the ground, throwing jockey Rosie Napravnik to the deck.

Pluck, trained by Todd Pletcher, not only stumbled out of the stalls, but lost three lengths as he swerved to avoid Napravnik and was still last turning for home.

However, he made a brilliant recovery to surge past the field in the final 200m to win by a length from Soldat and Willcox Inn.

Despite all the mishaps at Churchill Downs, nothing was more impressive than Ebony Flyer's victory at Kenilworth. She was backed from 7-2 to 2-1 which was a surprise because not too many horses win from draw No 14 over 1400m on the old course. Despite running three horses wide, the half sister to Captain's Lover cruised into the lead at the top of the straight and went on to beat stablemate Emerald Cove easing up by 5.50 lengths.



"This was impressive," said jockey Bernard Fayd'Herbe. "She's a big filly so I was quite happy to race her up on the outside. I looked at Felix (Coetzee) sitting in second place on Emerald Cove and I was amazed that I was still travelling at half pace.

"When we came into the straight I just squeezed her a little and in strides she went away from them."

Trainer Justin Snaith, who is earning a reputation training top fillies such as Dancer's Daughter, Captain's Lover and Sparkling Gem, said Ebony Flyer was working with some of his top colts. "Her next run will be in the Fillies Guineas. I doubt she's going to stay in the country. I only hope I will be the person who will be allowed to train her overseas."

From *SAhorseracing.com* comes the following:

EBONY FLYER SHOWS STAR POTENTIAL IN ODESSA



Trainer Justin Snaith looks to have a star on his hands in Ebony Flyer (SAF) and the daughter of Jet Master (SAF) duly maintained her unbeaten record with a sparkling win in the Gr 2 Odessa Stud Championship for 3-year-old fillies over 1400m at Kenilworth on Saturday. Stablemate Emerald Cove (SAF) edged out School Captain (SAF) for second with In Like Flynn (SAF) completing the quartet.

Fragrant Al darted across from a wide draw to lead from Pelican Point with Ebony Flyer, who was drawn even further out, getting across to race in third. School Captain was next best ahead of Emerald Cove, Street Runner and Florist Rose.

Fragrant Al was soon under pressure in the straight as Ebony Flyer bounded up the centre of the track and skipped a few lengths clear. The race was over by the time they entered the last furlong as she proceeded to put daylight between herself and the rest of the field.

It was left to Emerald Cove to give chase and she had to be hard ridden to hold off School Captain with In Like Flynn not disgraced by any means in fourth.

Ebony Flyer could well follow in the footsteps of half-sister Captain's Lover (SAF) on what she's shown so far. Unbeaten in three, she looks to have plenty more to come and the Cape Fillies Guineas must surely be firmly on the radar now..



Kin-III-Wuff Rice Cause will be the scene of the Cape Fillies Guineas, which will be renewed December 4.

BIG WEEKEND FOR TOP FILLIES AND MARES

By David Thiselton



The weekend's racing, both here and abroad, was dominated by some amazing displays from fillies and mares. Whilst one of them, Zenyatta, suffered a heartbreaking first loss of her career in Saturday's Breeders' Cup Classic, another who replicates her in some ways, Ebony Flyer, kept her unbeaten record in scintillating fashion winning the Odessa Stud Championship while a paternal relative of Zenyatta's, Hollywood Boulevard, scooped one of the most sort after cheques in South African racing, the Emperors Palace Ready Run Cup.

Then there was also the fantastic mare Goldikova who became the first horse to win a Breeder's Cup race three times, the filly Alderry who finally lived up to her potential by winning the Grade 2 Peermont Emperors Palace Charity Mile, and the filly Success Counts who won the Grade 3 Starling Stakes for the same connections as Ebony Flyer. Ebony Flyer, at 17 hands and one inch, is only an inch shorter than the magnificent Zenyatta, and her trainer Justin Snaith revealed that like the latter her biggest asset is her temperament.

"She's one of the friendliest horses I've ever known," said Snaith. "She loves people and as soon as they come into the yard all she wants to do is come over, say hello and sniff them.



"I always tell the children who come into the yard to go over to her. She's a real gentle giant. It's especially unusual for a good filly to have such a nice nature." Ebony Flyer used her big, relaxed stride to overcome her 13 draw in the 13-horse field on the tight Kenilworth old course, as she steadily rounded horses from a midfield position to turn for home with just 2 in front of her. In the straight she displayed a fine turn of foot when asked the question and powered clear to win by 5 ½..

South African been Barry Barry good to Barry and Kathleen Irwin.

THE RACEGOER

KEEPING YOU ON THE RIGHT TRACK



Ebony Flyer was an area winner of the Odessa Stial Championship at Kaniwhorth on Saturday.

Future looks bright for Ebony Flyer

MICHAEL CLOVER
Ebony Flyer took up to her name with a most impressive performance in the Odessa and Championship at Kaniwhorth on Saturday.
The dark bay colt came over to start a short graded maiden for the American Bloodstock Cape Fillys Guineas on November 4 and Joseph Snaith is already talking about an international campaign.
This handsome colt of a filly sired over her first in the parade ring, she is 13.3 hands and at 200kg she was between 1m and 2m faster than her opponents and it was the same story in the race.
Driven on the wide inside, Bernard Fayd'Herbe had assigned himself to racing three wide but she broke so fast that he was able to move across and within three strides I was sitting second.
The 2.1 favourite was just as quick when he wanted to make his move. I squirmed her, gave her a little tap and she was away from them.
Indeed she drew further and further away to make smart stable companion Rowland Love by five and a half lengths with her rider doing no more than put her neck in appreciation.

Snaith, winning the Grade 3 for the third time in four seasons, said: "This filly is extraordinary and her work at home is incredible. You have got the same but filly to Grade 1 performance five-year-old before with AJ."
Overseas
"After the summer season I think it is not an option. I would rather go to America and I will recommend that she goes overseas. I just hope I am going to be the one to take her."
"I was also impressed with Emerald Lane because we've had a few problems with her and she will go for the Fillys Guineas as well."
The Joe Master sired winner was lead by William Engelbrecht and was brought by Barry Irwin (in partnership with Vanashree and Anant Singh) for P200 000 at the National Sale, largely because she is a half-sister to Captain's Lover who won the 2017 Odessa and Fillys Guineas for her work.
It was quite a day for Fayd'Herbe who initiated a four-timer when Muscham convincingly took the Fillys maiden (race three) for Mary Slack and Mike Bass, and then sprang a 9-1 surprise on Sabine Plattner's Storm Sagaz for

Egno Gonzalez in the 1 500m hurdle.
Lucky Moon proved expensive here and Keris Teetan reported that the 7-1 shot was reportedly changing legs.
Fayd'Herbe also had an unexpected win in the graduation plate (race six) when Stingo Malings beat the odds laid on Ghosh Gold. Mike Stewart thought Mico Swart's 11-1 winner would do little more than have a grass gallop.
The Bass stable continues to match strides with Mico de Kock at the head of the races with log and the yard's tally reached 41 when Chris Fuller sprang a 15-1 surprise (34-1 on the tote) on Silvan Wind in Marsh Shirriff's colours in the 1 600m handicap (race five).
Morne Winmar got up close home on Bastille Day for Glen Fuller in a blister finish to the 1 400m maiden (race two) and the Joey Hansden Teetan combination struck with Sir William Pigot Brown's Orchard House in the seventh, an 1 800m handicap.
Biru Mjokwa brought Eric Sande Welcome Boy from last to first in the opening workriders maiden while M.J. Byleveld on the Vaughn Marshall-trained Chrysalis correctly judged the breakneck pace of the finale.

FLAMINGO PARK MONDAY

1 400m - BEST OF LUCK TEAM SOUTH AFRICA MAIDEN PLATE (F & M) 12 BUCKETS OVER 1000m	5 14.25 - 10 SOUTH AFRICA PROVED BOYS (M 17 HANDICAP F & M) 12 BUCKETS OVER 1800m	6 16.25 - SOUTH AFRICA VERSUS THE WORLD (M & F) HANDICAP 12 BUCKETS OVER 1000m																																																
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Big girls don't

Mike Smith was a broken man - but still there he is...
Within 10 minutes of Zenyatta's agonising defeat in the Breeders' Cup Classic he was out of the saddle and against a table. The pair was clear.
I got away a little slow and was having a rough time past the wire the first time. She wasn't there to stay.

Snaith, who has won three of the last four runnings of the Odessa and finished a narrow second in the other, rates Ebony Flyer even better than her half-sister, Captain's Lover, who won the Odessa and the Grade 1 Cape Fillys Guineas before being named Equus Champion three-year-old filly.

"She can work with anything I have in the yard," he said, an endorsement of her speed, considering she looks likely to see out a mile and more. Bernard Fayd'Herbe landed the ride because Snaith stable jockey, Felix Coetzee, will be away riding in the Far East for part of the summer and Snaith wanted one jockey to partner her throughout her Sizzling Summer campaign.

Barry Irwin of Team Valor bought Captain's Lover at the National Yearling Sales and due to her success bought her dam, Sunshine Lover, together with the foal at foot by Jet Master, Ebony Flyer.

"Barry is over the moon," said Snaith. Irwin owns her in partnership with movie mogul Anant Singh and his wife, Vanashree, and just fifteen minutes after the Odessa, another filly the partnership owns, the Ormond Ferraris-trained Count Dubois filly, Success Counts, beat one of last season's top juveniles, Happy Archer, to win the Starling Stakes over 1 400m at Turffontein. Ebony Flyer pulled up very well and Snaith said, "She takes racing very well despite her size. I will discuss it with Barry, but my feeling is that the Guineas, Paddock Stakes and Majorca Stakes should be her route."