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From *Thoroughbred News* comes the following:

EBONY FLYER DOMINANT IN DIANA STAKES

By Liesl King



Ebony Flyer, the South African version of Black Caviar, showed she is back to her best with an emphatic victory in the Grade 3 Diana Stakes (1400m) at Durbanville in the Cape on Saturday. The big black filly returned after 280 days off, which included a wind operation, but although still a bit bulky, she was on her toes in the parade ring and appeared fit. The start was slightly delayed as In Like Flynn and Barcelona Winter broke through the front of the stalls. Both horses were reloaded but it unsettled In Like Flynn who fly-leaped as the gates opened and lost a length.

Ebony Flyer jumped on terms and settled into second on the rail behind Barcelona Winter, with Hollywoodboulevard and Frequent Flyer on her tail. Approaching the 600m mark, Andrew Fortune on Barcelona Winter slowed the pace right down forcing long striding Ebony Flyer to move around her to take up the lead.

At the 300m mark Felix Coetzee loosen the reins a notch and the filly extended her lead to win comfortably under a hands and heels ride by two lengths. Barcelona Winter hung on for a brave second, followed by Frequent Flyer and Hollywoodboulevard.

The filly will come on from this run and while she will be contending the Summer Season in the Cape, her ultimate aim is the Queen's Plate over 1600m on the 7th of January.

Justin Snaith, Ebony Flyer's trainer, admitted that he was fooled by filly's work at home.

"We are a long way off with her, I didn't realise how much work we still need to do." The idea was one more run and then the Queen's Plate, but she is obviously quite unfit still" commented Snaith.

"She came out softly and she was travelling relaxed behind the leader. She has such an enormous stride so you have got to let her use herself. She took it up easily and it was like pace work for her" added Felix Coetzee. Coetzee ended by thanking Snaith for sparing him from having to ride the filly when she first came back into work.

"Justin rode her in her first few days back as she has a massive buck and it is a long way down from up there."

From *SAhorseracing.com* comes the following:

WINNING RETURN FOR EBONY FLYER



Ebony Flyer co-owner Mrs. Gaynor Rupert after Grade 3 Diana Stakes victory with brothers Jono and Justin Snaith and their father, Snaith patriarch Chris (with tie).

There was relief mixed with jubilation as star filly Ebony Flyer (SAF) made a winning return to the racetrack in the Gr 3 Diana Stakes over 1400m at Kenilworth on Saturday. Barcelona Winter (SAF) stayed on for a gallant second ahead of Frequent Flyer (SAF) and Hollywoodboulevard (AUS).

Barcelona Winter went out to make the running once the field settled down, with Ebony Flyer, who went off at 4/10, taking up second spot ahead of Hollywoodboulevard and Frequent Flyer in a race where none of the others was able to get in a blow.

Ebony Flyer was sent about her business upon entering the straight and quickly took up the running. Any anxiety about how she would handle the final stages following a nine-month layoff were quickly dispelled and she galloped on strongly enough for a comfortable two-length win.

The winner only needed to be somewhere in the vicinity of her best to dispose of this field and duly did so. All eyes will now be on how well she can build on this performance to achieve her main goal this summer, the Queens Plate.

Only that race itself will tell, but the signs are encouraging and for now her connections and many fans can celebrate a winning comeback and indications that she can fulfill the devastating potential she showed during her shortened but brilliant 3-year-old campaign last season.



Ebony Flyer won in spite of a dawdling pace and a tight race course in So Africa.

Barcelona Winter and Frequent Flyer ran superb races in defeat, especially the former who had to do the hard work up front but still fought hard all the way to the line. They would not have bumped a rival of Ebony Flyer's quality previously and they emerged with plenty of credit.

Hollywoodboulevard was another one returning from a break and she had also changed stables in the intervening eight months. She ran out of steam late and never threatened the favourite but she should come on for this run.

In the end, though, this race was really about one horse and those fans who got to see her in action will have gone home optimistic that Ebony Flyer can produce more fireworks before the summer is over.