

DUBAI WORLD CUP

21st Running



LONG LIST

*21 points for a
fast-minute
'World Cup
action plan*

.....

HOT HORSES

*The contenders
you should be
rooting for
this year*

.....

A GRAPHIC LOOK AT HOW
THE WORLD'S BIGGEST
RACE COMES TOGETHER



Racing Silks

DRESSING UP FOR
RACE-DAY NEED NOT BREAK
THE BANK. OUR FASHION
GUIDE SHOWS YOU HOW



Massimo Dutti

PERSONAL TAILORING

EST. 2004

MOE | MERCATO | DUBAI MALL | MIRDIF CITY CENTRE DEIRA CITY CENTRE
DUBAI FESTIVAL CITY | BURJUMANALAIN MALL | ABU DHABI MALL | YASMALL

A jockey wearing a yellow helmet and goggles is riding a dark horse on a green grass track at night. The horse is in mid-stride, with its front legs extended. In the background, a white fence separates the track from the stands. Above the track, several powerful stadium lights illuminate the scene, creating a dramatic effect with bright beams of light and a dark, cloudy sky.

Everything can change in a nanosecond

GULF NEWS 
THE INTELLIGENT CHOICE

Sponsor of the Dubai Golden Shaheen at the Dubai World Cup 2016

CONTENTS



Page
30

Blazer Dh249, H&M
Jumper Dh189, Mango Man
Trousers Dh630, Boggi
Shoes Dh110, Iconic

PAGE 6

The Prep

It's the 21st edition of the Dubai World Cup, here are 21 things you need to know

PAGE 14

The Schedule

Race and event timings — so you're aware of where to be and when

PAGE 16

The Races

An overview of fixtures, contenders and jockeys to bring you up to speed

PAGE 30

The Look

Race couture doesn't get better than this. Our style guide shows you the way

PAGE 40

The Facts

From hats to breeding thoroughbreds, these infographics have it sorted



ON THE COVER

PHOTOGRAPHY GRACE PARAS
STYLING AMRITA DIVECHA



A GULF NEWS PUBLICATION

EDITOR — GN FOCUS Keith J. Fernandez | **DEPUTY EDITOR** Sankar Sri Pillai | **ART EDITOR** John Catherall | **DEPUTY ART EDITOR** Giovan Paz
DESIGNER Praniith Ratheesan | **DEPUTY CHIEF SUBEDITOR** Priya Mathew | **SUBEDITOR** Riaz Naqvi
PRODUCTION EDITOR, GN PUBLISHING Keith Langford | **SENIOR PICTURE EDITOR** Verina Durand | **PICTURE RESEARCHER** Harriet Santos
OFFICE SECRETARY Ma Cecelia Jyrwa
HEAD OF ADVERTISING Tripti Singh | **SALES MANAGER** Sundar Ghosh | **ACCOUNT MANAGERS** Isha Bhatia, Mirza Ghalib
EVENTS & PROMOTIONS MANAGER Mona Motamedi | **AD CONTROL** Gordon D'Souza | **PRE-PRESS SUPERINTENDENT** Sarder Bakiruddin
PRE-PRESS OPERATORS Yousaf Naeem, Shirantha Mendis, Atul Paradkar, Sohellur Rahman, Eliezer Semine

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Abdul Hamid Ahmad | **PUBLISHING DIRECTOR, GN PUBLISHING** James Hewes | **DESIGN DIRECTOR** Miguel Gomez
PRODUCTION EDITOR Omar Ali

DUBAI P. O. Box 6519 **Editorial:** 04 406 7473 **Advertising Sales:** 04 406 7455 **Email:** gnfocus@gulfnews.com
ABU DHABI P. O. Box 7441 Tel: 02 634 5144

*All information on Dubai World Cup 2016 races and fields printed herein are correct at the time of going to press. For updates visit www.dubairacingclub.com or check schedules at the venue

Printed and published by
Al Nisr Publishing LLC
Distributed by **Al Nisr Distribution LLC**

21 things you ought to know

Our last-minute to-do list should keep you in form for race night

BY RACHEL MCARTHUR SPECIAL TO GN FOCUS

1 FINDING TICKETS *Book them ASAP*

Haven't decided if you're going yet? You need to do so today. At the time of going to print, six of the ten ticket categories were already sold out, so while choices are limited, you can still grab some last-minute deals. Here are the packages that are available:

APRON VIEWS

For a prime location for the after-race concert, it doesn't get much better than the Apron Views. It is dubbed the social heart of the DWC after all. Sandwiched between the racetrack and the Meydan Grandstand, this is where the musical stage is located, as well as the venue for the popular Jaguar Style Stakes (more on that below). Bring sunscreen, as a lot of the area isn't covered.

Worth noting that this ticket is for admission only and not inclusive of food and beverages.

How much? Dh450 per person

SKY BUBBLE

This private dining

experience, which includes a buffet and selected beverages, promises 360-degree views of the Meydan Racecourse and the Dubai skyline with the Burj Khalifa. Although separated from the main arena, guests can catch all the live action on the television monitors.

Although it is in an intimate venue, Sky Bubble offers free seating on a first-come, first-serve basis, so get there early for some good spots.

How much? Dh1,400 per person, which also includes access to Apron Views

THE GALLERY

For the best view of the finish line and its winners,

opt for tickets to The Gallery. This grandstand venue comprises indoor and outdoor seating areas, as well as a large selection of food and drink options, including afternoon tea, gourmet dinner snacks, soft drinks and house beverages.

How much? Dh1,500 per person, which also includes access to Apron Views as well as Parade Ring Lawns

GENERAL ADMISSION

If it's just a view of the races you are after, then grab these General Admission tickets from the Meydan ticket office outside Gate B.

How much? Dh25 per person.

Get ready for Janet Jackson live in Dubai. But it's strictly for ticket holders.

As with every DWC, a megastar takes to the stage following the race for a night of fun and entertainment. Following previous appearances by the likes of Kylie Minogue and Jennifer Lopez, this year is the turn of US superstar Janet Jackson.

Unfortunately, no ticket, no show. Also, organisers confirmed to GN Focus that only ticket holders of the Apron Views category and above can access the concert.



GETTING READY



3 45-minute slimming shot challenge

The countdown to Dubai World Cup has begun... time for that figure-hugging dress. Unfortunately, life is rarely perfect, especially for those of us who grab rushed meals off the office canteen and spend late nights chasing deadlines.

The problem? A bloated body that always compels me to slip into a loose number.

But despair not, there is help at hand, courtesy of Bionix Body Designers. No, you won't lose 10kg in one session, but if it gets a few inches off in time for the races, it's good enough.

Bionix Body Designers has launched the 45-minute slimming shot challenge, an effective and aggressive non-surgical body shaping treatment using high intensity focalised ultrasound (HIFU). Depending on the body composition a slimming shot is designed using a combination treatment of two to three advanced non-surgical technologies. There is no downtime, no pain, no pin prick and immediate visible results are assured.

Now, not everyone who wants to have this treatment may qualify. Before confirming for the session the doctor/consultant evaluates your eligibility. The treatment is best for those who are close to their ideal size and shape; it's a last resort to get that irritating inch off that diets and exercise can't budge. I had a perfect BMI of 20, but a pinch of

tummy fat qualified me for the treatment. My therapist Maria Mitzi Jumagdao marked my body into areas and then applied a treatment gel. The head of the machine was placed on the targeted area and HIFU energy was focused to destroy the fat cells under the layers of the skin.

During treatment, I felt a slight warmth and tingling from the head of the machine, but it was bearable (I have a high threshold of pain). The therapist used lighter or stronger energy depending on how much I could take. After the session, the area treated was slightly red and sensitive to touch.

The slim shot treatment focuses on melting fat and draining it out through lymphatic channels. It improves metabolism, induces skin tightening and gives the body a more muscular tone. You also get back to your normal work day right after the session. But the full results can only be seen in eight to 12 weeks, the time needed for the body to naturally process the fat.

Verdict: While I might not have seen significant results right after the treatment, I did feel all the attributes of a gruelling workout. And I happened to lose around 1.5cm around the waist. Yes! The week following my treatment, I did notice that my lower abdomen felt less bloated. My trousers continue to feel loose around the belly. So, the treatment ideally needs to be done a week before you wear that dress!

The procedure conducted for review is worth Dh2,500. Contact Bionix Body Designers on 04 352 0705 or 056 759 0075.

— Krita Coelho/Staff Writer



PICTURES: CORBIS AND GULF NEWS ARCHIVES

4 Dress to impress... hats galore

For the World Cup there are fashion rules to be followed and rule number one is wearing a hat. There are lots of stores across Dubai that sell a variety of looks. For high-street chic, your best bets are department stores such as Bloomingdale's Dubai (04 350 5333), Harvey Nichols (04 409 8888), Debenhams (04 368 5282) or Saks Fifth Avenue (04 501 2700). For something a little more dramatic, head over to Burjuman (04 352 0222), which is hosting its annual

Parade of Hats until tomorrow. This pop-up features more than 500 headpieces created by milliners from around the world, including Nigeria's Itam by Kings Signature, known for its bold florals, bright colours and bohemian glamour, Liza Georgia Millinery, an Australian brand that specialises in vintage-inspired looks, and Designs by Christiane, whose work is described as an "explosive collection of feather hats and headpieces". Prices range from Dh150 to Dh3,000.

The Grosvenor House Dubai is also exhibiting handmade fascinators and hats by milliner Christiane Edmonson. The show is on at Tower One, in the lobby until tomorrow, from 10am to 6pm. ➔



5 Men, a fast-minute suit IS possible...

Dubbed the region's first contemporary bricks-and-clicks tailor, The Custom Shop New York offers a bespoke tailoring experience thanks to innovative technology. Rather than take measurements manually, clients are measured using a special body scan machine, which, according to the shop, is 76 per cent more precise. It also has a 24-hour suit option. Co-founder Zaki Ali tells us more.

24 hours is a short turn-around for a bespoke suit; how do you provide the perfect fit with such little time?

We supplement the body scan technology with a master couturier who cuts fabric based on the stipulated design and requirements of the customer. We are confident that our experience as third-generation garment manufacturers will help us stitch the suit to perfection, despite tight deadlines.

What can you achieve in terms of personalisation in such a short time?

We have coloured buttonholes on the sleeves and lapel, in addition to funky prints in the inner lining. There is also the option to have your name embroidered. These are all in-house facilities.

What about specific looks or fabrics?

The best result in 24 hours would be a more classic approach. To push the envelope on creativity we can help the last-minute guy play with colour, indulge in an interesting inner lining for his jacket and monogramming. If you're looking for something more specific, we can treat it on a case-to-case basis as our stylists are well geared to cater to clients with limited time frames and will advise you on the best possible options.

Can you also make a shirt to go with the suit in the same time frame?

It's possible — but we would advise the client to actually work with more classic options available in our store. We stock over 200 fabrics in our flagship location at The Beach Centre and it would be ideal if the client is able to choose from one of these. Suits start at Dh1,695. Check out Customshoponline.com



6 but so is a budget-friendly one

Along with a number of tailors in Satwa and the rest of old Dubai, lots of high-street stores sell affordable options. Try shops such as Topman, Zara and H&M. The drawback with readymade is that it doesn't necessarily fit perfectly; however, you could take it to a tailor to have it fitted. If you are going to tighten the suit, then always remember to buy a jacket or trousers that are a little loose. There are a number of tailors scattered around Satwa and old Dubai. Or try Stiches (Threadstiches.com), which has branches in Jumeirah Beach Residence and Al Barsha.

7 Suits not your thing? Rent one instead

Why pay big bucks for something you're only going to rock once?

Al Ghazal Mall's Murad Boutique (04 345 8979) offers tuxedo rentals from just Dh250. There are also kilts and tailcoats in store.

Then The Wedding Shop (04 344 1618) in Jumeirah Centre offers rentals from Dh300. Despite the name, Jumeirah Plaza's The Bridal Room (04 344 6076) also stocks some suit and tuxedo options for hire.

8 Ladies, need some help with your dress?

There's no reason you can't find someone to help put an outfit together for you. There are a number of personal shoppers across the UAE. Considering the short notice, opt for an hour's service with an in-store personal shopper at one of the department stores mentioned above.

For something more extensive, visit Stylemedivine.com, run by celebrity stylist Kelly Lundberg. Her talented team can transform just about anyone.

9 But you can also borrow a look

Designer-24 offers luxury high-end designer dresses for hire. For something last minute, check out its showroom in JLT. Those ordering online will have their dresses delivered and no need to worry about dry cleaning after that as they handle that themselves. For more info visit Designer-24.com

LAST-MINUTE PAMPERING

10 For her

Looking for a quick hair treatment or manicure before race night? You're in luck. Sisters Beauty Lounge's Signature Ritual is an indulgent tailor-made treatment designed to enhance the hair's inner radiance thanks to a special Kerastase mask and massage. From Dh270. Visit Sistersbeautylounge.com

Tips and Toes is offering an express manicure with DWC nail art, Russian extensions and an express pedicure for Dh500. Visit Tipsandtoes.com

Glow facial (pictured right) is a ten-minute session where gentle cryogenically cooled air is passed over the skin's surface, activating collagen production in the skin's deeper levels, leaving younger looking skin. Price on request. Visit Cryo-health.com



11 For him

Get ready for the day with a relaxing traditional Turkish hammam at Talise Ottoman Spa, Jumeirah Zabeel Saray. From Dh450. Browse Jumeirah.com for more details.

Or go for some hand and feet therapy (from Dh90) at Urban Male Lounge. This spa offers a range of treatments, including nail trimming, cuticle trimming and hand massage. Visit Nstyleintl.com

Fancy a classic shave? 1847 at Emirates Towers is known as the emirate's very first male grooming lounge. Prices vary. Check out 1847uae.com for more details.

12 Carry in your clutch

Keep your make-up in place

It can get warm during the day. Keep some NYX oil blotting sheets handy, which absorb excess oil and shine without ruining foundation, to ensure your make-up is in place. Dh75



All about the shades

Keep it stylish at the DWC with LA couture eyewear brand Sama. Its two latest designs are Catwalk and Finale (pictured above). From Dh350.



Pink perfection

Hot on the heels of its True Nudes and Pure Reds collections, L'Oréal Paris Color Riche is back with this spring's hottest hue. La Vie en Rose features six velvet matte pinks, perfect for any outdoor look. Dh75 ➔

GETTING
THERE13
*The best public
transport options...*

Leave the car at home — the Meydan Racecourse is easily accessible from Shaikh Zayed Road by taxi. You can arrive on time without having to search for a parking spot, and enjoy the race and entertainment into the early hours. The taxi drop-off and pick-up point is located outside the Meydan Grandstand.

Alternatively, book a car ride service on your smartphone. Uber and Careem will also be operating throughout the day.

14
...or arrive in style

Dubai Exotic Limo (Dubaiexoticlimo.com) rents BMW 7 Series VIP sedans at Dh2,000 for ten hours. For something bigger opt for the 30-passenger F550 Big Red at Dh7,000 for ten hours.

Or why not arrive in a chopper? Helidubai.com is offering helicopter transfer to the DWC. Price on request. Call 04 224 4033



AT THE VENUE

15
Fashion competition

The Jaguar Style Stakes is back in the 21st edition of the DWC. This fashion event will see the most stylish men and women at the races battle it out in the hope of winning a snazzy Jaguar F-Type. Other prizes include Longines watches, cash prizes, pamper packages and hotel stays.

The 2016 Jaguar Style Stakes will feature six categories: Best Dressed Lady, Best Dressed Man, Best Dressed Couple, Best Hat, Most Creative Hat and Longines Most Elegant Lady. To enter, attendees must register onsite from 1pm at one of the Jaguar Style Stakes registration desks.



The winners in the Best Dressed Couple category strike a pose at the Jaguar Style Stakes 2015

16
Snap happy

Looking for some light nifty cameras to capture all the action for the event? Here are a few options

PANASONIC LUMIX TZ100

This 20.1-megapixel camera boasts a superb quality lens, as well as a 4K video option where it's possible to change the focus point of a shot after filming

**SAMSUNG GALAXY S7**

For Android fans, the Samsung Galaxy S7 has a great little camera function. Compared to the S6, this gadget's camera comes with a wider aperture and bigger sensor that makes for a more dramatic picture at night

**IPHONE 6S**

Of course, we can't leave this one out. One of the most popular devices for on-the-go shooting, the iPhone 6S features a 12MP iSight camera with a number of colour filters. It also comes with 4K video shooting capability

7 ways to take better photos at the 'World Cup



Taken by Gulf News photographer Ahmed Ramzan on an iPhone 6S, this image beautifully captures the night sky while bringing the subject of the photograph, the horse, into sharp focus

PICTURES: GULF NEWS ARCHIVES

Tf you walk away from the Dubai World Cup with bad photos, you've only yourself to blame. Bad workmen always blame their tools. Here are six ways to make the most of your phone cameras, since your clutch is probably too small for anything else! There's no such thing as a bad camera, only bad photographers, so here are some ways to help you along.

1. LOOK FOR THE LIGHT
In Dubai, we all love to snap sensational sunsets. At the races, this means capturing the speed coupled with the beauty of the horses. But it's important that you always to pay attention to both the direction and colour of the light to get the desired effect. This can have a big impact on your photograph.

2. KEEP FLASH ON DURING THE DAY
If it's an extremely bright day outside (which it often is in Dubai) and the sun is contributing to all those unwanted harsh shadows on your subject, switch on your flash.

By forcing all that extra light onto your subject what you are technically doing is filling in those shadows to help create an even exposure.

3. CONSIDER ALL ANGLES
At Meydan, we're sometimes taking photos from either the grandstand or down on the track close to the racing action. But it does good to remember that you'll probably get a more interesting shot by lowering your angle, getting up high and shooting directly down or straight up, depending on where you are.

4. ALWAYS USE THE RULE OF THIRDS — THE GRID
A great tip is to turn on the grid feature on your phone to line up your shot, especially if you're going for a landscape photo of the race track. For example, when taking a picture of the field, it's natural to want to centre the horizon in the frame. However, pictures often look better if the horizon falls on the upper or lower horizontal dividing line.

5. AUTOMATICALLY ADJUST YOUR EXPOSURE
As night approaches at the Dubai World Cup, tap the camera screen at certain points to manipulate the light in the photo. You can also adjust the brightness and the exposure by scrolling your finger up and down on the display. Playing with these exposure adjustments is key to getting the best light in your photo.

6. CREATE LIVE PHOTOS
Those with an iPhone will know all about live photos, which bring your photos to life. This nifty feature puts together a beautiful 12-megapixel photo capturing the moments just before and after it was taken, complete with sound and movement. Bring those moments to life by pressing on the photo. Also called Zoe Photo on HTC devices and Motion Photo on the Samsung Galaxy S7.

7. USE HDR (HIGH DYNAMIC RANGE) FOR SKY SHOTS
Sunset in Dubai is hard to capture as you want to take all that detail in the foreground, while also capturing as much of the colour and the sky in the background. HDR lets you capture a wider range of light intensity, combining multiple exposures into a single image.
— M. Sen/Special to GN Focus

18 'Insta-cool videos

You've got the camera... use it for more than just photos. There are loads of apps right now that create fun mini-videos or GIFs that you can instantly upload on the night. Here are three to try:



PHHHOTO

A favourite of the Kardashian clan, Phhhto (nope, not a typo — that's how it's spelt) lets you take moving photos that are easy to share online. It works by snapping four photos and stringing them together to form a gif.



CINEMAGRAM

Start by recording a video like you normally would. Once done, you can highlight a specific area in the video that you want to animate while keeping the rest still. This is iPhone-only, but popular alternatives for Android include Loopcam and Viddy.



FYUSE

This spatial photography app allows anyone with a smartphone to capture 3D, 360-degree images. The resulting image is really cool and you can even export it as a video.

19 Follow the action online

Catch all the behind-the-scenes action by checking out who's tweeting, posting on Instagram, etc. The official hashtag is #DubaiWorldCup

CAN'T BE THERE?

20 Watching from home?

Grab some snacks and chill on the sofa. The DWC will be televised live on Freeview on Dubai Racing TV, as well as online via Dmi.ae

21 Other events around Dubai

Not into horse racing? Head to one of these events on Saturday instead:

8TH EMIRATES CLASSIC CAR FESTIVAL, DOWNTOWN DUBAI

It's a great opportunity for enthusiasts to share their passion for beautiful and historic vehicles.

CIRQUE LE NOIR DUBAI 2016, DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE
With sold-out shows in Auckland, Sydney, Singapore and Christchurch, Cirque Le Noir has more than 20 different acts including daring acrobats and comedy. Tickets start Dh199. Visit Dubai.platinumlist.net

RUSSIAN SEASONS IN DUBAI, BURJ AL ARAB

A mini fashion show, jewellery showcase and a popular Ukrainian girl band, all at venue? What's not to like? Tickets start Dh500. Visit Mpremiere.com for details.





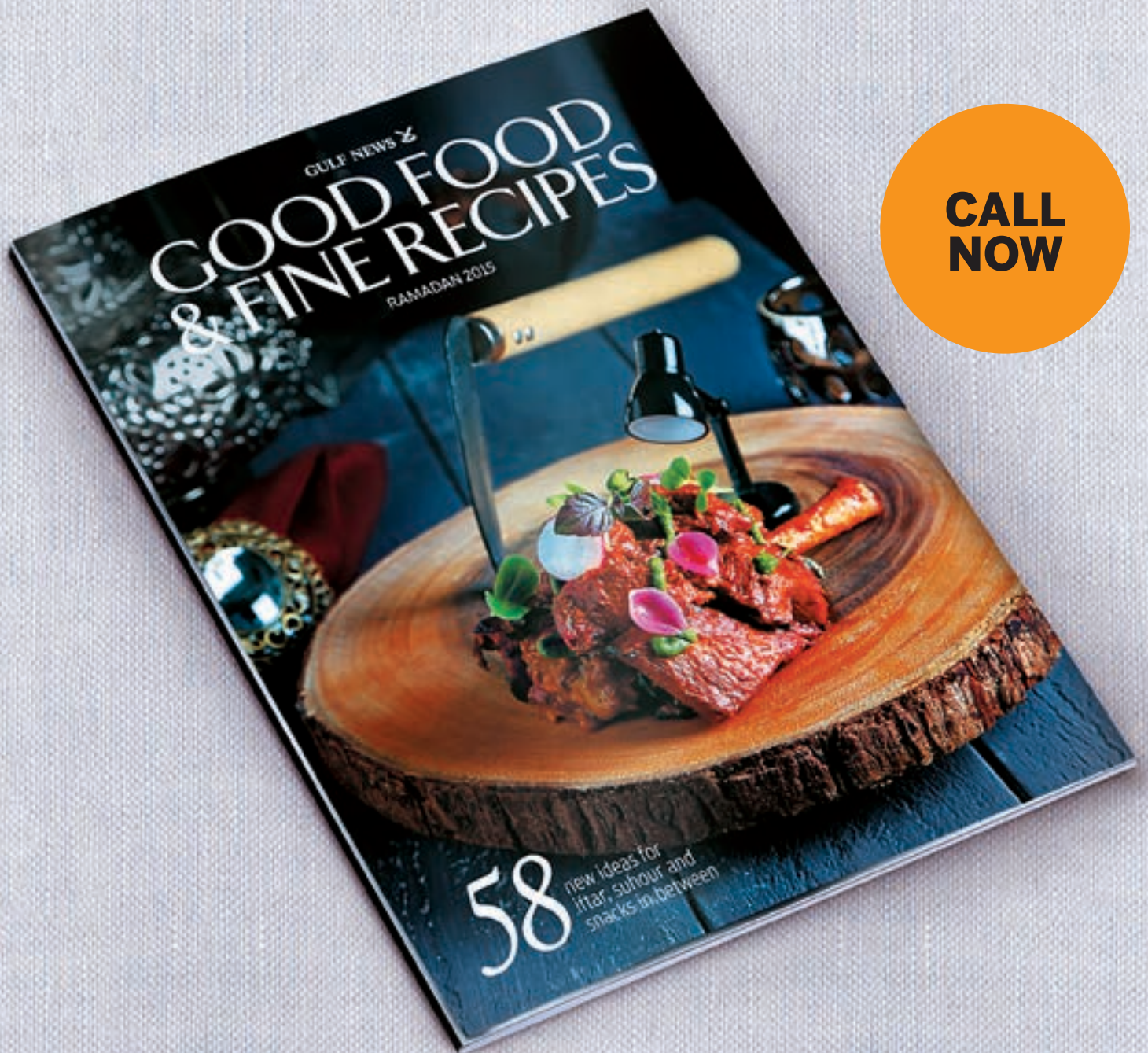
RACE-DAY EVENTS

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
12 noon	Gates open	
2.00pm	Hospitality suites open	
1.00-3.30pm	Jaguar Style Stakes registration	Jaguar Style Stakes Arena (Apron Views) and Level 1, Concourses A,C and D
RACE 1		
3.45pm	Dubai Kahayla Classic (Group 1) Purebred Arabians 2,000m (Dirt), \$1,000,000 empowered by IPIC	
3.55pm	Judging of Jaguar Style Stakes	Jaguar Style Stakes Arena (Apron Views)
RACE 2		
4.20pm	Godolphin Mile (Group 2) 1,600m (Dirt), \$1,000,000 sponsored by Meydan Sobha	
RACE 3		
4.55pm	Dubai Gold Cup (Group 2) 3,200m (Turf), \$1,000,000 sponsored by Al Tayer Motors	
	Pick 6, Tricast and Superfecta competitions close	
5.10pm	National anthem	
RACE 4		
5.35pm	UAE Derby (Group 2) 1,900m (Dirt), \$2,000,000 sponsored by The Saeed & Mohammed Al Naboodah Group	
RACE 5		
6.10pm	Al Quoz Sprint (Group 1) 1,000m (Turf), \$1,000,000	
RACE 6		
6.45pm	Dubai Golden Shaheen (Group 1) 1,200m (Dirt), \$2,000,000 sponsored by Gulf News	
7.05pm	Dubai World Cup Ceremony	
RACE 7		
7.45pm	Dubai Turf (Group 1) 1,800m (Turf), \$6,000,000 sponsored by DP World	
8.00pm	Skywards Thanks A Million draw	Presentation Stage
RACE 8		
8.20pm	Dubai Sheema Classic (Group 1) 2,410m (Turf) \$6,000,000 presented by Longines — Official Timekeeper	
RACE 9		
9.00pm	Dubai World Cup (Group 1) 2,000m (Dirt) \$10,000,000 sponsored by Emirates Airline	
9.15pm	Pick 6 and Superfecta competition results	Near Pick 6 Reward Centre (Level 1, Concourse B)
9.30pm	Dubai World Cup Closing Ceremony	
10.00pm	Dubai World Cup Concert	Located at end of Apron Views
12.00am	Dubai World Cup closes	

* ALL TIMINGS CORRECT WHILE GOING TO PRESS. PLEASE REFER TO THE RACE PROGRAMME FOR ANY CHANGES IN THE SCHEDULE

Good Food & Fine Recipes Ramadan Edition

We're putting together the Ramadan edition of Good Food & Fine Recipes 2016.
It's sure to be awesome, so grab your advertising spots now.



**CALL
NOW**



CONTENT THAT
MATTERS

CONTACT:

Sundar Ghosh
Advertising Sales Manager
sghosh@gulfnews.com
052 9423034

Mirza Ghalib
Account Manager
mghalib@gulfnews.com
052 8940958

Isha Bhatia
Account Manager
ibhatia@gulfnews.com
056 3194266



The Dubai World Cup trophy on display at the Meydan racecourse last year

GETTY

May the best win

Globeform's **Geir Stabell** offers an expert view with his top picks for all the big races at Meydan this World Cup weekend

~ 16 ~

GN FOCUS DUBAI WORLD CUP MARCH 24, 2016

FIXTURES

DUBAI KAHAYLA CLASSIC

Group 1 Purebred Arabians; 3.45pm;
\$1 million; 2,000m; empowered by TPIC



The Al Maktoum Challenge Round 3 was a breeze for Handassa and Paul Hanagan on Dubai World Cup Carnival night at Meydan earlier this month

GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/VIRENDRA SAKLANI



HANDASSA

The French-trained runner owned by Shaikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and UAE Minister of Finance, looks the one to beat in this year's Kahayla Classic. The massive son of Madjani won the third round of the Al Maktoum Challenge with ease.

Handassa took some time to find his stride but when he did, rounding the home bend going very wide, it was soon obvious who would win the contest. He grabbed the lead early in the straight, and quickened away for a comfortable 8½-length win over Af Tawaq, with Nashmee back in third place. Shaheer finished fourth and race favourite Abu

Alabyad was fifth, passing the winning post 14 lengths behind the winner.

Handassa, who showed clear signs of immaturity in the paddock, stopped the clocks in 2.15.5 — a new course record for the Purebred Arabians.

It was his first run over a dirt track, as he had raced on turf and an artificial track (once) in Europe. Handassa also won a Group 2 contest over 2,100 metres last year. Stamina is not a problem and he isn't short of finishing speed either.

He looked a different class while pitted against a strong field on his UAE debut, and visibly thrilled jockey Paul Hanagan said after the race, "He gave me a feel like a thoroughbred turning in." 🐾

~ 17 ~

GN FOCUS DUBAI WORLD CUP MARCH 24, 2016

Thakif, ridden by Harry Bentley, won HH The President's Cup by half a length in February at the Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/AHMED KUTTY

THAKIF

Winner of HH The President's Cup over 2,200 metres at Abu Dhabi and runner-up in a strong race over 1,600 metres at Doha in February, Thakif is one of the leading contenders for this year's Kahayla Classic. A versatile and adaptable performer, he has also shown his liking for Meydan's dirt track, having won the first round of the Al Maktoum Challenge over 1,600 metres here back in January. Thakif went to the front that day and soon had his rivals in trouble. He ran out a comfortable 3¼-length winner from Af Mathmoon, with Bigg N Rich 4 lengths further adrift in third and Sha'Red fourth.

This win set Thakif up for a crack at the President's Cup, where he switched successfully to racing on turf. Young Harry Bentley was on board this time and he placed Thakif just behind the early leaders, before taking the lead with 400 metres to go. Thakif came under pressure from Abu Alabyad, who finished strongly from the back, but he held on to win by half a length.

Nashmee, who finished third behind Handassa on Super Saturday, filled third place. Two weeks later, Nacer Samiri's star tried the turf course in Doha and ran another game race to be second, though Aba'ath proved seven lengths too good for him. Thakif is a high-class runner who is also very game and consistent. He might be Handassa's biggest danger here.

VERSAC PY

A regular player on the main stage of Purebred Arabian racing over the past four years, Versac Py made an encouraging comeback finishing second to Haa Jeb in the Al Maktoum Challenge Round 2 over 2,200 metres in early February.

The winner was rather unexpected but nobody was surprised to see Versac Py make an impact.

He had been out of action since last year's Kahayla Classic, when the son of Njewman picked up an injury and was pulled up. He looked fully recovered with his game run last month, and we know he has the class to match strides with the very best. He was beaten by only a nose in the 2013 Kahayla (caught very late by Al Mamun Monlau, with 2012 winner Tim Fred Texas behind him).

Last year, Versac Py won the Al Maktoum Challenge Round 3, beating Af Lafah by 3¼ lengths over 2,000 metres. Abu Alabyad, another tough top flight runner, was beaten ten lengths into third place on that occasion. It was another classy performance by Versac Py, and a return to such form would put this nine-year-old in the mix on World Cup night.



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/VIRENDRA SAKLANI

Paul Hanagan also won the Al Maktoum Challenge Round 3 race last year, then with Versac Py

GODOLPHIN MILE

Group 2; 4.20pm; \$1 million; sponsored by Meydan Sobha



Lanfranco Dettori rode Sloane Avenue (far left) to come in second as Tamarkuz, with Paul Hanagan, won the Godolphin Mile last year

MARKING

Marking is an exciting four-year-old trained by Kieran McLaughlin, who will saddle Frosted for the World Cup. This son of Bernardini has had two sprint runs in Dubai. One to forget and one to remember. He was favourite for his UAE debut on February 11, but took a bad stumble as the gates opened, went down on his knees and gave jockey James Doyle no chance of staying on board. Rich Tapestry went gate to wire in this race and ran out a solid winner.

It is impossible to say whether Marking could have given him a fight but the Godolphin runner made amends with a highly promising handicap win two weeks later, when he carried to top weight to victory over Kifaah, who was swept aside as Marking hit top gear in the closing stages. The winning margin was 2 lengths and the time almost identical to that recorded by Rich Tapestry.

Marking certainly has the talent to go right to the top. He ran second to North America's top sprinter, Runhappy, in last year's Malibu Stakes at Santa Anita in California. He won a good allowance race in New York by open lengths.

COOL COWBOY

Trainer Doug Watson has had an excellent season and takes a shot at the Godolphin Mile with Cool Cowboy, a tough, versatile runner who won the final prep for this contest in style three weeks ago. Facing seven rivals, including Al Maktoum Challenge Round 2 winner Le Bernardin, Cool Cowboy was well fancied in the Burj Nahar and he delivered with a rock-solid 3¼-length win after leading all the way.

The Meydan dirt track favoured speed but it was still a fine performance by Cool Cowboy. Probably his best ever. He was in command throughout and had matters wrapped up well before the winning post. The Burj Nahar was Cool Cowboy's seventh win from 17 starts. He began his career with Dale Bennett in the US, where he won four races, including the Inaugural Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs as a juvenile. This miler can also sprint, as we saw when he took second behind Reynaldothewizard in the Dubawi Stakes in January. Given his prominent running style, Cool Cowboy would be best off with a low to middle stall in the Godolphin Mile, a race where it's hard to make an impact from a wide starting point.

SLOANE AVENUE

Sloane Avenue, who ran such a big race to be runner-up in last year's Godolphin Mile, has had just the one outing in England since, when he ran second to Captain Cat in a four-runner affair at Kempton Park in February.

Sloane Avenue was a hot favourite that day but we should probably not read too much into this 1-length defeat, as the race was run totally differently to what suits him best. Captain Cat, who is also a very smart performer, was able to dominate in front and Sloane Avenue could not quite cut him back. What this Jeremy Nosedo trainee needs is a strongly run race with plenty of early speed, setting matters up for his off-the-pace closing style.

He finished best when failing by no more than a nose against favourite Tamarkuz at Meydan a year ago. While the winner had a perfect start from stall 1, Sloane Avenue broke from the widest stall in the 15-runner field. He must have good chance of avenging the bad luck this time. A typical miler, Sloane Avenue is a lightly raced five-year-old with three wins from seven career starts. 🐾

DUBAI GOLD CUP

*Group 2; 4.55pm; \$1 million;
3,200m; sponsored by Al Tayer Motors*

MANATEE

Andre Fabre, arguably one of the world's best racehorse trainers, has an intriguing contender for the Gold Cup, Godolphin's five-year-old Manatee. This son of Monsun carried a tough weight to a solid win last spring over dual Group 1 winner Prince Gibraltar in the Grand Prix de Chantilly over 2,400 metres on soft ground. Manatee looked tapped for toe as the pace lifted up a notch when the field came into the straight, but soon found an efficient stride to launch an attack. Jockey Mickael Barzalona had him in full flight as he took the lead with under 200 metres to go. Prince Gibraltar, winner of the Grosser Preis von Baden later on, stayed on for second, though was always held by Manatee. The winning margin was three parts of a length. Agent Murphy finished third and Spiritjim took fourth.

Manatee stepped right up in class four weeks later but had to settle for fourth in the Grand Prix de Saint Cloud, beaten by three high-profile names; Treve, Flintshire and Dolniya. A break followed, before he was thrown into the deep end in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in early October. Starting as one of the outsiders, Manatee finished 11 of the 17 runners, eased in the closing stages and beaten 7¼ lengths behind champion Golden Horn. Manatee's next task was a test of stamina, as he went for the Prix Royal-Oak. The stayers' classic was won by Vazirabad, who was followed home by Siljan's Sage, Mille Et Mille, Cirrus des Aigles and Manatee, who was once more beaten 7¼ lengths by the winner.

Manatee opened his 2016 campaign by running a game second in the Prix Darshaan over 1,900 metres (surely too short for him) at Deauville three weeks ago. Beaten a length by Elliptique, he pipped Sheema Classic contender Gailo Chop for second that day. Manatee may just turn out to be the biggest threat to Gold Cup favourite Vazirabad.

Star Empire, in picture left, ridden by Sam Hitchcott wins race 5 of the Longines Master Collection at Meydan in January

STAR EMPIRE

Mike de Kock's experienced stayer Star Empire, who was third and second in the past two editions of the Gold Cup, goes to post with an obvious chance again this year. This nine-year-old recorded his first win for almost three years beating Elleva in a 2,000-metres handicap in January, but don't be fooled by that stat; Star Empire is nothing but game and consistent. His past twelve results read 322337832153. Five of these runs came in Group races, while the other seven were under tough weights in handicaps.

That he was able to win over 2,000 metres underlines his versatility. Staying is his game. The slow early pace was therefore against him in the Nad Al Sheba Trophy over 2,800 metres three weeks ago. He was a bit slow from the gates, then took up a position in midpack, before fighting his way up to third place. But Star Empire carried too much weight on this occasion, due to a mistake. His camp will be looking for a real test on World Cup night.



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/AHMED RAMZAN

VAZIRABAD

Vazirabad, owned by the Aga Khan and trained by Alain de Royer-Dupré in France, will be a tough nut to crack in the Dubai Gold Cup. This four-year-old son of Manduro is one of Europe's best young stayers. He notched up five straight wins at home last year, ending with a game one-length success in the Prix Royal-Oak over 3,100 metres at Saint-Cloud in Paris, where he beat older horses for the first time.

Jockey Christophe Soumillon rode his normal patient and confident race on the gelding, biding his time at the back of the field early on. He delivered the favourite with a relentless run and Vazirabad won by a length from Siljan's Sage. Mille Et Mille finished third and the well-known globetrotter Cirrus des Aigles (who failed to see out the trip) came home in fourth place. Vazirabad's sire Manduro excelled over 1,600 and 2,000 metres, and this Gold Cup contender probably gets more stamina from the dam, Visorama, who ran third in the Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud over 2,400 metres.

POLAR RIVER

This Doug Watson-trained filly has taken Meydan by storm, with four ridiculously easy wins in the fillies' division, and she must have an excellent chance as she meets the boys for the first time on World Cup night. Fillies have done well in the UAE Derby before but this lady could turn out to be something extra special. Polar River's victory streak began with a 13½-length success in maiden company in December when she showed excellent speed to win over 1,200 metres.

Her next task, the UAE 1000 Guineas Trial in January, represented a big step up in class and a small step up in distance, as she tackled 1,400 metres just as easily to beat Promising Run by almost 5 lengths. The two met again in the Guineas four weeks later. The distance was now 1,600 metres and the result the same. Only this time, Polar River beat Promising Run by 13 lengths. It was a most impressive run by the young, still relatively inexperienced, daughter of Congrats.

Jockey Patrick Dobbs had her in a perfect position just behind the leaders from the outset and sent her into a clear lead some 400 metres from the winning post. Polar River drew further and further away from her five rivals. Her performance made her the best horse seen in the classic division at Meydan this season. It also scared off all but two rivals in the UAE Oaks on March 3, when Polar River moved up to 1,900 metres and faced Vale Dori, a top-level winner in Argentina last May, and Dolly Dagger, a badly outclassed runner representing Sweden.

She cruised home again, beating Vale Dori geared down by three parts of a length. The race told us little new about Polar River but it was nice to see her handle the Derby distance so well. It will take a classy colt to lower her colours in the Derby.

Polar River, the filly that won the UAE 1000 Guineas Trial at Meydan this January, will take on the boys for the first time in the UAE Derby

UAE DERBY

*Group 2; 5.35pm; \$2 million; 1,900m;
sponsored by The Saeed & Mohammed Al Naboodah Group*

FRANK CONVERSATION

Trainer Doug O'Neill and owner Paul Reddam, who won the Godolphin Mile together with Spring at Last in 2007, have an interesting UAE Derby contender this time in Frank Conversation. This son of Quality Road, born on May 2013, probably needed time to fulfil his potential.

He has won two minor classics already in 2016, landing the California Derby in January and El Camino Real Derby in February — both staged over the artificial Tapeta track at Golden Gate Fields in San Francisco. Having finished fifth in the Los Alamitos Futurity on dirt in December, he won these races with little fuss, beating Tusk readily by three parts of a length when stepping up to 9 furlongs (about 1,800 metres) in the El Camino Real. He started favourite and raced nicely settled in a handy position throughout, before moving up three wide to take command halfway down the home straight. Frank Conversation's form can be best described as solid, not top-class, but he may be about to hit an upward curve.



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/WIRENORA SAKLANI

MARKET RALLY

Market Rally, a wide-margin maiden winner for trainer Wayne Catalano at Monmouth Park in New Jersey last August, improved in leaps and bounds from his first to his second start at Meydan. He continued the progress with another impressive win in the Al Bastakiya over 1,900 metres on Super Saturday.

A son of Florida Derby winner Unbridled's Song, Market Rally opened his classic campaign by finishing fourth of eight behind Steady Pace in the UAE 2000 Guineas Trial in January. When they met in the UAE 2000 Guineas in February, Steady Pace failed to fire. But Market Rally went straight to the lead in the 1,600-metres contest, opened up a clear advantage and was never in any danger. Confidently ridden by Chris Hayes, the colt cruised home for a comfortable 6-length win over Lazzam. He handled the distance well when the result was duplicated on Super Saturday. He is open to improvement and must be a live contender in the UAE Derby. ➡

AL QUOZ SPRINT

Group 1; 6.10pm; \$1 million;
1,000m; sponsored by Meydan Hotels and Hospitality



BUFFERING

A top-class sprinter from Australia, Buffering is a horse all the others will fear in the Al Quoz. This remarkable eight-year-old, trained by Robert Heathcote, ran in 18 Group One races before managing to win one and he has definitely improved with age and experience. Looking back today, he has been successful in six of his past 12 Group One contests, and he is coming off an easy win in the Magic Millions Plate over 1,300 metres in January.

Buffering was a 1.30-favourite in that event as he stood out as the class act in the field. As always, he was one of the fastest from the gates. Moving smoothly forward from a wide post, he led virtually throughout the right-handed course to beat Mister Booze without being extended. His preceding start, a win in the Winterbottom Stakes on the left-handed Ascot course, was against much tougher opposition.

Buffering had won the race back in 2013 and this time he beat Ortensia's stakes record by stopping the clocks in a sharp 1.08.17. Buffering used his excellent speed

to get a clear advantage down the stretch and won safely by a length from the staying-on Watermans Bay, who franked the form winning the Seahill Stakes over the same course a week later.

Buffering was sidelined with injury from December 2014 to October 2015. He has come back just as good, if not better, and must have a great chance at Meydan. The only worry is the distance as his best form has been over 1,200 metres. On the other hand, with such gate speed and such a determination to win, a strongly run 1,000-metres dash at Meydan might suit him well. His Magic Millions win took Buffering past the A\$6 million (about Dh16.43 million) mark. Only two Australian sprinters had managed that before him: the legendary Black Caviar and Takeover Target.

Paul Hanagan rides Ertijaal (Ire) to victory at the Dubai Racing Carnival in January



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/AHMED RAMZAN

MUTHMIR

The silks of Shaikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and UAE Minister of Finance, will be carried by both Ertijaal (Ire) and Muthmir in this sprint and the latter is also in with a fine chance. He looked really well, but had a tough weight and needed the run when making his seasonal debut at Lingfield Park in England four weeks prior to World Cup night. This was in a Listed contest run over 5 furlongs (about 1,000 metres) around one turn on an artificial track.

Muthmir put up a game performance to be third, beaten 3 parts of a length behind course specialist Lightscameraction. He is better suited by a straight turf course. Al Quoz contender Goldream was the winner when Muthmir took third in the King's Stand Stakes at Royal Ascot in June. The son of Invincible Spirit gained a well-deserved big race win two starts later, when he beat Take Cover by a head in the King George Stakes at Glorious Goodwood. He has won over further, though the Al Quoz distance is his optimum.

DUBAI GOLDEN SHAHEEN

Group 1; 6.45pm; \$2 million;
1,200m; sponsored by Gulf News



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/VIRENDRA SAKLANI

Rich Tapestry won the Mahaab Al Shimaal race at Meydan in 2014 with Olivier Doleuze

ERTIJAAL (IRE)

This is the best turf sprinter seen in action in Dubai this winter. Shaikh Hamdan's locally trained Al Quoz contender may even be one of the best in the world, especially over 1,000 metres on a straight course. Ertijaal (Ire), who began his career with trainer William Haggas in England, gained two impressive wins here in January and February. His first success came in a handicap on the first day of the Carnival, when he slammed Divine by 4 lengths. The handicapper raised his rating, meaning he had to give a fair bit of weights to his 14 rivals when turning out four weeks on. But there too he had a comfortable 2-length win over Fityaan. He has excellent tactical speed and can lead early, but he is also happy to sit just behind the early leaders if the race unfolds that way. This gives his rider Paul Hanagan options and confidence. A son of champion sprinter Oasis Dream, he has 7 wins from 15 starts and it will take a world-class performance to deny him an eighth success on World Cup night.

RICH TAPESTRY

Rich Tapestry is a leading contender for the Golden Shaheen, a race he was runner-up in two years ago when only the Australian sprinter Sterling City got the better of this Hong Kong-based speedster. He could manage only third behind Muarrab when prepping for World Cup night in the Mahab Al Shimaal on Super Saturday, though that was clearly an off day for Rich Tapestry.

The eight-year-old gelding had already served a warning to his Golden

Shaheen rivals when bossing the field for a solid win in the Al Shindagha Sprint in February. His task that day may have been made easier when Marking stumbled right out of the contest at the start, but Rich Tapestry was by far the best of those who made it to the wire and he proved that he is still a force to be reckoned with at the top level. Confidently ridden by Frenchman Gérald Mossé, he led all the way and never looked in any danger at the finish. He beat Muarrab readily by 1½ lengths.

Reynaldothewizard, who had won so well on his previous outing, filled third spot, beaten another two lengths. Al Shindagha was Rich Tapestry's first run back since a below par effort in the Hong Kong Sprint on turf at Sha Tin in December. This veteran has plenty of international experience, having also won the valuable Santa Anita Sprint Championship in California back in 2014. He is a game, tough and battle-hardened sprinter, whose high cruising speed is a strong asset. 🐾

X Y Jet cruises home in the Sunshine Millions Sprint at Gulfstream Park in Florida



PICTURE COURTESY OF COGLIANESE/GULFSTREAM PARK

MUARRAB

Up to Super Saturday, this son of Oasis Dream was considered a notch below the very top of the sprint division. Muarrab changed all that as he enjoyed a breathtaking win in the Mahab Al Shimaal three weeks before World Cup night.

His easy success, while clocking the excellent time of 1.10.2 for the 1,200 metres, definitely gave him elite status. If he runs like that again, Muarrab will be in the first three in the Golden Shaheen. He may well win the big race. He met Rich Tapestry for a second time this season on Super Saturday, having been put readily in his place by the Hong Kong sprinter in February.

This time, the tables were turned. Muarrab broke fast from the stalls and went to the lead. Rich Tapestry, a heavy favourite, shadowed him but when Muarrab kicked on as they entered the home straight, Rich Tapestry was unable to do the same. Muarrab and Paul Hanagan soon put the race to bed. By the time they passed the winning post, the gap back to second best was an impressive 5¼ lengths. You could take nothing away from Muarrab. He was just super on the day.

CONFRONTATION

Confrontation, who had performed well when runner-up to such high-class contestants as Tonalist and Liam's Map in the US last year, improved his rating by winning the Firebreak Stakes over the Godolphin Mile trip at Meydan in early February.

He had been out of action for almost seven months, but showed no signs of being rusty as he came with a late surge to take the race by 2 lengths from next time out winner One Man Band, who just pipped Watershed for second.

Le Bernardin, who was coming off a win in the first round of the Al Maktoum Challenge, came home in fourth place, while the heavy favourite Mubtaahij had to settle for fifth. The form looked very solid indeed.

It was Confrontation's sixth success from 15 starts. He has also finished second on six occasions, giving him a remarkable 80 per cent top two strike rate. How can we not like a runner like this?

X Y JET

This American speed merchant looks the one to beat in the Golden Shaheen. A sprinter who missed much of 2015 due to injury, he was explosive at Gulfstream Park in Florida this winter and looks right for this race.

He came back from a near seven-month break to win at Monmouth Park last September, then shipped south and gained an easy win at Gulfstream in November, before taking a step up in class in the Mr Prospector Handicap at the same venue in December. He won impressively by over 9 lengths from Grande Shores.

X Y Jet stopped the clocks in 1.08.4, just a couple of lengths slower than the track record — and doing so with ease. His next win, in the Sunshine Millions Sprint four weeks later, was almost as fast and visually just as impressive. Again he quickened right away from his rivals coming into the straight, powering away from them to beat Wildcat Red by 4¼ lengths. X Y Jet is one who goes straight to the lead and keeps on running faster than the rest all the way to the winning post. His prep race, in the Gulfstream Park Sprint on February 27, was another solid win. He comes here in top form.

DUBAI TURF

*Group 1; 7.45pm; \$6 million;
1,800m; sponsored by DP World*



TRYSTER

Coming off two explosive wins over this turf course, Tryster might be the main danger to the competition in the Dubai Turf. This race represents a step up in class for the Godolphin runner but he has such a turn of foot and wins with such ease that he is probably a fair bit better than the handicap ratings say. How good is this son of Shamardal? World Cup night should give us the answer. He came from last to win the Jebel Hatta, run over this trip, on Super Saturday three weeks ago. Tryster was a hot favourite, having humiliated his rivals in the Dubai Millennium Stakes just over two weeks earlier, but it was still impossible not to be taken by the manner of his victory. He swooped past horses at the finish to win by 1½ lengths from Farrier, with Ertijaal (Aus) back in third.

Tryster was a bit of a win machine at a lower level than this in England last year, and he looked an improved performer already winning on his seasonal debut in February. He was making his first start since last September and switching successfully from artificial surfaces to turf, but neither factor seemed to bother him. Nor did the moderate pace, as he quickened right past rivals to win by almost 3 lengths from the race-fit favourite Haafaguinea (who was third to Postponed next time out).

Last year, Tryster took the Winter Derby at Lingfield Park — a race he won by three parts of a length from this year's Winter Derby winner Grendisar. After that win, Tryster was well below his best as last of five in the top-class Eclipse Stakes at Sandown Park in the summer, when he may have been feeling the effects of his winter/spring campaign and the track may not have suited him. But he bounced back with a game half-length win over Let's Go in a minor event at Chelmsford City four months later. Tryster is a game and enthusiastic runner who always tries his best and he must be a live contender.

Tryster ridden by William Buick wins the Dubai Millennium Stakes at Meydan in February

REAL STEEL

Japanese challenger Real Steel, a four-year-old son of champion Deep Impact trained by Yoshito Yahagi, holds a strong chance in the Dubai Turf. Although effective also over much further than this 1800-metres trip, Real Steel seems ideally suited by it. He tackled this distance on his first start of the year, when running a brave race for third in the Nakayama Kinen on February 28. The race was won by last year's Japanese Derby hero Duramente — who is one of the favourites for the Dubai Sheema Classic.

He made a taking comeback to hold a late charge from Ambitious by a neck, while Real Steel was just a half-length further adrift in third place. Real Steel was well fancied for this race and his performance was by no means a surprise. He was runner-up in three hot events last year; to Duramente in the Japanese 2,000 Guineas over 2000 metres, to Lia Fail in the Japanese St. Leger Trial over 2400 metres, and to Kitasan Black in the St. Leger — contested over 3,000 metres. Real Steel did win in 2015 as well, after having beaten Duramente in a Group 3 race over 1800 metres early in the year. He is a consistent runner and should go close here.

VERY SPECIAL

Like the French-trained Cladocera in 2015, Very Special completed the Cape Verdi/Balanchine double at Meydan this season, and like Cladocera will try her luck against the boys in the Dubai Turf.

Cladocera finished sixth to Solow in last year's edition of this \$6-million contest. Very Special looks likely to do better. To say that she can match strides with the mighty Solow would probably be expecting too much, though there is an old saying in horse racing: Never be afraid of one horse. And she deserves her place in the field. Very Special has as good a chance as any other runner going up against Europe's champion miler. She led all virtually throughout to beat Excilly easily by 3 lengths in the Cape Verdi over 1,600 metres in February, and rider James Doyle employed the same tactics as she stepped up in class and distance in the Balanchine on March 3.

Very Special was really attacking from the front that day and moved up a gear as she entered the home straight. Euro Charline, a top-level winner in the US in 2014, was favourite but never had much of a chance against Very Special, who ran on strongly all the way to the line to beat her chief rival by 2½ lengths. 🐾



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/VIRENDRA SAKLANI

DUBAI SHEEMA CLASSIC

Group 1; 8.20pm; \$6 million;
2,410m; presented by Longines

DARIYAN

A leading international owner-breeder, the Aga Khan hasn't had many runners in Dubai over the years, but he captured the Sheema Classic last year when his principal trainer in France, Alain de Royer-Dupré, saddled the filly Dolniya to win this \$6-million event. This time the team has Dariyan primed for the big race and the four-year-old son of Shamardal had a satisfactory preparation when finishing second to Postponed on Super Saturday.

Dariyan was easily beaten that day, but may be open to improvement and has a decent chance in the Sheema. He showed steady progress as a three-year-old, when he closed out his campaign with a respectable third to Highland Reel in the Hong Kong Vase at Sha Tin. Dariyan stayed on well despite some trouble in running that day and finished 3 lengths behind the winner. He's effective from 2,000-2,400 metres and seems to act on any ground. Normally held up at the back of the field, he has speed to take up a more prominent position.



Andrea Atzeni astride Postponed after winning the Dubai City of Gold Race at Meydan earlier this month

POSTPONED

Previously trained by Luca Cumani, this five-year-old was a very smart performer over the Sheema distance in England last year. He peaked by winning the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes at Ascot in July. Postponed finished third behind Snow Sky and Eagle Top at the Royal Ascot meeting five weeks earlier, but turned the tables on both these rivals when it mattered the most — albeit only just versus Eagle Top, who he beat by a nose after a thrilling finish.

It was Postponed's fourth career win and he gained a fifth by landing the Prix Foy at Longchamp in September. He beat Spiritjim by three parts of a length, with Baino Hope third and Dolniya fourth.

All in all, Postponed's form is solid, though perhaps not quite yet what we would call world-class. He is ideally suited to 2,400 metres and goes well on any ground. His prep run for Sheema came in the City Of Gold on Super Saturday, when he was a visually impressive 3-length winner over French challenger Dariyan.

DURAMENTE

This colt was the top three-year-old in Japan last season when he won the two most important classics, the Satsuki Sho (2000 Guineas) at Nakayama in April and the Tokyo Yushun (Derby) in May. Unfortunately, a crack at the best older horses in big autumn races never happened, as Duramente sustained injuries to both his forelegs and found himself on the sidelines. A long rest was needed, leading up to a return to training in January.

Fully recovered, the son of King Kamehameha came back to racing action at Nakayama on February 28 when he beat Ambitious by a neck to win the 1,800-metres Nakayama Kinen. Real Steel finished third.

Duramente's 2000 Guineas success last year came at the chief expense of Real Steel, who is also owned by Sunday Racing Co Ltd. Duramente won the 2,000-metres contest readily by 1½ lengths. Eventual St Leger winner Kitasan Black took third. Duramente stepped up to 2,400 metres in the Derby, staged six weeks later. Quite dominant once more, the Mirco Demuro-ridden favourite obliged by almost 2 lengths from Satono Rasen, with Satono Crown back in third (both were Group 2 winners in 2015). Duramente's dam, Admire Groove, was a top-class filly who won back-to-back editions of the Queen Elizabeth Commemorative Cup at Kyoto. His rider is an excellent horseman who made international headlines when he rode a superb race to win the Dubai World Cup on Victoire Pisa five years ago.

Can Demuro strike again at Meydan? Of course he can. He has a fine partner in Duramente, a classy performer open to further improvement this year.

DUBAI WORLD CUP

Group 1; 9pm; \$10 million;
2,000m; sponsored by Emirates Airline



California Chrome gallops to victory at Meydan in February to take the Trans Gulf Electromechanical Trophy

CALIFORNIA CHROME

California Chrome hardly needs an introduction. Racing fans worldwide are familiar with his résumé. To recap: He won the first two legs of the US Triple Crown in 2014, taking Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes in great style. The Belmont was a bridge too far, but Chrome bounced back to form in the autumn, to be a close third in the Breeders' Cup Classic and win the Hollywood Derby (where he proved himself on turf). Last year was not so good, though finishing second in

the World Cup was no mean feat. He was shipped to England with the intention of competing at Royal Ascot. California Chrome looked sharp on the Newmarket gallops but a last-minute setback ruled him out of the Prince of Wales' Stakes. Sent back to trainer Art Sherman in California, the imposing chestnut was given a long time to recuperate. He returned to action in the San Antonio Stakes at Santa Anita in January. The five-year-old was a bit rusty but far too good for his rivals. Imperative was held at bay

in the closing stages, with the winning margin 1¼ lengths. Hoppertunity took third. Some observers knocked the form but that makes little sense. Chrome needed the outing and he tired a bit in the closing stages. He will be much sharper in the World Cup. His winning handicap run here on February 25 also indicates an upswing in form. It is impossible to say whether California Chrome will get back to his absolute best but if he does, well then, the others are probably running for second. 🐾

Frosted, a hot favourite going into the race, won the Al Maktoum Challenge Round 2



GULF NEWS ARCHIVES/IRENDRA SAKLANI

FROSTED

Frosted, four-year-old son of Tapit, one of the top stallions in North America, and Godolphin-owned runner made a sparkling seasonal debut winning the second round of the Al Maktoum Challenge in early February. Sure, he had by far the best form going into the race and was a hot favourite but Frosted still exceeded expectations as he powered home by 5 lengths from Gold City. The 1,900-metres track record was broken and Frosted had clearly improved on his three-year-old form.

After tasting success in the Wood Memorial in April, he went on to take fourth in the Kentucky Derby and second in the Belmont Stakes, on both occasions running with great credit in the wake of Triple Crown champion American Pharoah. He was third in the Travers Stakes at Saratoga when Keen Ice managed to beat American Pharoah after Frosted put serious pressure on the favourite from the outset but tired in the closing stages. He returned to form with an easy win in the Pennsylvania Derby in September, but failed facing American Pharoah yet again in the Breeders' Cup Classic, where Frosted beat just one of his seven rivals. He had a tough campaign last year but has stood up to it well and could be in for a successful season.

MSHAWISH

An American bred son of Medaglia d'Oro out of a daughter of Kentucky Derby winner Thunder Gulch, Mshawish has a pedigree pointing at strong form on dirt tracks. Nevertheless, this handsome runner began his career on turf and progressed to become a very good one too. He won the Gulfstream Park Turf Handicap last winter, before running third to Solow in the Dubai Turf.

This time, Mshawish returns to Dubai with an even bigger assignment. He is set for the World Cup. Certainly the most versatile of the big-race contenders, Mshawish is coming off a career-best performance in Florida, having captured the Donn Handicap at Gulfstream in February. Mshawish travelled strongly just off the pace in the prestigious event and proved much too good for Valid, who he had beaten when taking the Hal's Hope Stakes at the same venue four weeks earlier. Switching Mshawish to dirt has been a success and, although the competition will be stronger and the distance 200 metres longer, he may well step up again. Recent form counts for a lot in racing, and the Donn has been a good guide to the World Cup in the past. Mshawish has a lot going for him. But will he cope with 2,000 metres?



Mshawish wins the Donn Handicap at Gulfstream in Florida in February

PICTURE: COURTESY OF ADAM COGLIANESE

KEEN ICE

This US contender made a name for himself when he became the only horse to beat American Pharoah last year. It happened in the Travers Stakes at Saratoga in August, a race contested over the same distance as the World Cup. American Pharoah and Frosted hooked up in a gruelling duel up front, a duel Frosted grudgingly lost, but Keen Ice came with a strong finish to pass them both in the last few strides. He beat the champion by three parts of a length, with Frosted 2¼ lengths further adrift. Was it a fluke? It was markedly Keen Ice's best run but he is undoubtedly a serious horse and must be respected in the World Cup. His chances increase if the race is run at a strong early pace. He had been runner-up to American Pharoah in the Haskell Invitational four weeks prior to the Travers and ran fourth in the Breeders' Cup Classic when a lack of pace was very much against him.

He resurfaced at Gulfstream Park ten weeks later to have his World Cup prep in the Donn Handicap. Five horses beat him, with Mshawish on top, though note that Keen Ice was carrying top weight and that he once more stayed on well from the back. The Donn is 1,800 metres. Keen Ice is much better over 2,000. Do not dismiss him in the \$10-million race.

CORBIS



Keen Ice, under Javier Castellano, came with a strong finish to beat American Pharoah and Frosted in the last few strides to win the Travers Stakes at Saratoga in August

SPECIAL FIGHTER

This five-year-old son of champion juvenile Teofilo has taken longer to blossom than his father. Special Fighter was a nice, useful horse when trained in England in his younger days, but he has turned a corner big time at Meydan this season.

Who would have thought this Mosabab Al Muhairi-trained chestnut would win a Group 1 as the Carnival opened? His trainer perhaps, though even he must have been somewhat baffled as Special Fighter ran his rivals into the ground for a solid 4½-length win of the Al Maktoum Challenge Round 3 three weeks ago.

Covering the full World Cup distance, Special Fighter led from start to finish and he quickened from the front early in the straight. Within a few strides it was clear that he would not be caught. He ran on in great style under jockey Fernando Jara to win the race in a sharp 2.03.09 — a new track record. Jara rode Invador to World Cup fame back in 2007 and in Special Fighter he seems to have found another live wire. Gun Pit, a solid dirt runner from Hong Kong, ran second in the Al Maktoum 3, with 2¼ lengths back to Faulkner in third. OK, the two favourites Mubtaahij (fourth) and Keen Ice (seventh) both had a bad day. The question now is: can he repeat it? ●



Special Fighter carries Silvestre de Sousa to victory in the Chengdu Dubai International Cup at the Jinma Lake Racecourse in China in April last year

GULF NEWS ARCHIVES

Recessionista at the races

You mayn't get this close to racehorses at Meydan, but you can at Dubai's Al Maha Desert Resort — in style and on a budget!

PHOTOS **GRACE PARAS** STYLING **AMRITA DIVECHA**



Hat Dh450, Debenhams
Crop top Dh149, Zara
Ruffle skirt Dh329, Zara
Shoes Dh475, Vince Camuto
Cuff Dh49, H&M
Ring Dh315, Kate Spade





FOR HER
Hat Dh550, Debenhams
Crop top Dh279, Lipsy
Skirt Dh399, Lipsy

FOR HIM
Blazer Dh399, Zara
Trousers Dh199, Zara
Checked shirt Dh80, Iconic
Pocket square Dh200, Boggi
Belt Dh79, H&M





FOR HER

Fascinator Dh475, Marks & Spencer
Culotte jumpsuit Dh249, River Island
Jacket Dh250, Iconic
Shoes Dh199, Zara
Necklace Dh120, Aldo Accessories

FOR HIM

Shirt Dh245, Massimo Dutti
Bow tie Dh200, Ascots & Chapels
Waistcoat Dh780, Boggi
Trousers Dh259, Mango Man
Shoes Dh675, Massimo Dutti

Models Michaela and Marouane at FLC

Hair and make-up Amanda Almeida at illumin8

Assistant Photographer Anas Thacharpadikkal

Fashion Assistant Rachel Walker

Location Al Maha Desert Resort and Spa

IS YOUR GADGET ADDICTION ALT[^] OF CTRL[^]?

Check out www.gntech.ae for the latest product news,
reviews and tech trends



www.gntech.ae

Gadget soup for the techie soul



 Facebook.com/GNTechAE

 Twitter: @GNTechAE

 Website: www.gntech.ae

 Instagram: @GNTechAE

 Snapchat: GNTechAE



Trot out the stats

From breeding thoroughbreds for the big night to prepping hats, our infographics provide insight into how the world's richest horse race comes together



Turf war

The ten greatest races in the world



DUBAI WORLD CUP

Date: Last Saturday of March
Race: 2,000m; Meydan Racecourse, Dubai, UAE
Last winner: Prince Bishop



KENTUCKY DERBY

Date: First Saturday of May
Race: 2,000m; Churchill Downs, Louisville, Kentucky
Last winner: American Pharoah

PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE

Date: First Sunday of October
Race: 2,400m; Longchamp Racecourse, Paris, France
Last winner: Golden Horn



BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC

Date: Late October/early November
Race: 2,000m; location varies
Last winner: American Pharoah



EPSOM DERBY

Date: Early June
Race: 2,423m; Epsom Downs Racecourse, Surrey, England
Last winner: Golden Horn



MELBOURNE CUP

Date: First Tuesday of November
Race: 3,200 metres; Flemington Racecourse, Melbourne, Australia
Last winner: Prince of Penzance

THE IRISH DERBY

Date: Late June/early July
Race: 2,400m; Curragh Racecourse, Kildare, Ireland
Last winner: Jack Hobbs



THE HONG KONG CUP

Date: Mid December
Race: 2,000m; Sha Tin Racecourse, Hong Kong
Last winner: A Shin Hikari



GRAND NATIONAL STEEPLECHASE

Date: Early April
Race: 7,100m; Aintree Racecourse, Liverpool, England
Last winner: Many Clouds



KING GEORGE VI AND QUEEN ELIZABETH STAKES

Date: July
Race: 2,400m; Royal Ascot, Ascot, England
Last winner: Postponed

Ready for the long haul

There's more to transporting thoroughbred racehorses to big-ticket events than just that plane ticket

BY GEIR STABELL SPECIAL TO GN FOCUS

TIt's relatively easy for people to travel internationally for a race meeting these days — just book your flight, arrange your visa if required, pack your bags, grab your passport and head for the airport. Even travelling with pets has become relatively straightforward. Well, not as easy as adding your golf clubs to the baggage perhaps, but for many destinations not too complicated either.

Unless, you want to take your horse. International shipping of racehorses has become more and more common over the past couple of decades as horse racing turned into an international sport. Every year runners are sent to Dubai from all corners of the world, from Scandinavia to California and Australia. European visitors are most common, but the logistics of sending a thoroughbred athlete are often the same, whether it is setting out on a five-hour or a 24-hour journey.

What does such a horse need? A bale of hay and a bucket of water are obviously not enough when making arrangements.

What's required?

Internationally air-bound racehorses must:

-  Undergo veterinary tests required by the destination
-  Have flights booked at least one week before departure — there are no standby tickets!
-  Have import/export documents issued
-  Undergo pre-export quarantine before departure
-  Have completed questionnaire forms for customs with the shipping agency
-  Get to know and get on with the shipping agency's Animal Air Attendants, who will provide hay, water and care on the trip
-  Have their shoes removed, as it is much safer to fly without
-  Undergo quarantine upon arrival, in the UAE between 12 and 48 hours (depending on the length of the journey)

How does it work?

Horses are transported in stalls, similar to those used for road transport. The stalls sit on large pallets on the ground when the horses enter and are then loaded on to the plane by lift.

Due to airline security procedures, trainers' staff are not allowed to travel with the horses. Only cleared shipping staff are permitted on board.



Who pays?

The Dubai Racing Club covers the cost of the return air freight of visiting horses, provided the horse leaves Dubai within 30 days of the Dubai World Cup meeting. Visiting horses are allowed to stay up to 90 days.



When to ship?

Due to quarantine and settling-in periods, one needs a sensible timescale leading up to the big race, but a long time for acclimatisation is actually not necessary for the horse to do well in the race.

There are two schools of thought: some trainers prefer to send their horses as early as possible, while others like to ship as close to the big race as possible.

World Cup favourite California Chrome arrived from Los Angeles on January 22 and has already won a race at Meydan. Buffering, meanwhile, jetted in on March 15. Some international big-race winners around the world have shipped in even closer to the event.

Horses coming to Dubai from North America tend to need a longer recovery period after returning home than horses from Europe.

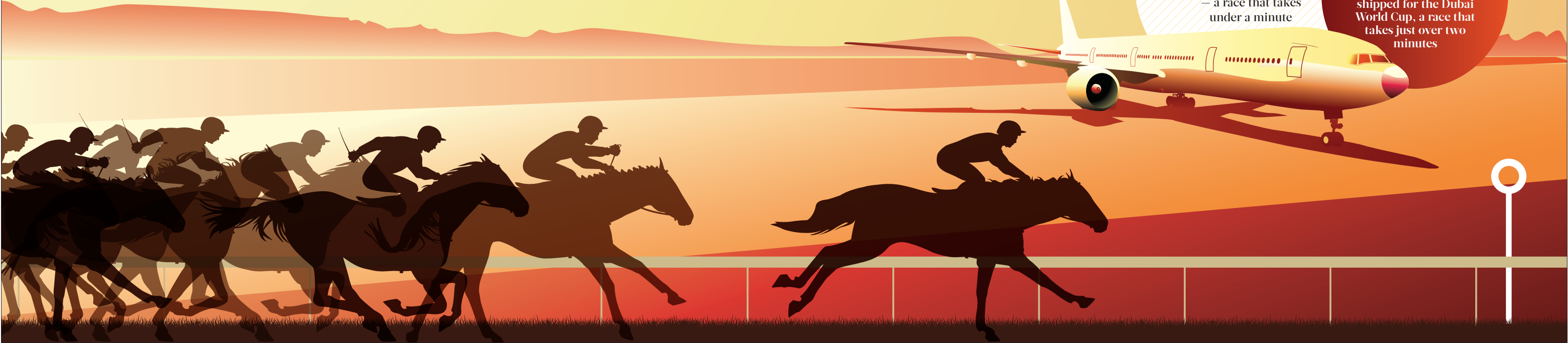
LONG TRIPS FOR SHORT RACES

15 hours

The journey Australian sprinter Buffering made for the Al Quoz Sprint — a race that takes under a minute

8,400 miles

This is how far California-based Hoppertunity has been shipped for the Dubai World Cup, a race that takes just over two minutes



To breed a winner

From stable to gate, **Geir Stabell** walks us through a horse's journey to the World Cup

Only the world's best horses can compete on Dubai World Cup night, where the main event carries a \$10-million purse. Yet not all were expensive purchases. Australian sprinter Buffering, one of the favourites for the \$1-million Al Quoz Sprint, was bought for \$16,500, while World Cup

contender Mshawish was sold for just \$25,000 when first changing hands as a weanling (age between foal and yearling).

The good purses and affordable training fees in the UAE mean it's easier to break even on racehorse ownership here than just about anywhere else. On average, owners get more than Dh200 back in prize

money for every Dh100 spent on boarding and training.

Most races at the Dubai International Racing Carnival offer a purse of \$120,000 plus. The races on non-Carnival days at Meydan typically have purses of Dh125,000 plus. The winner takes a whopping 60 per cent and the first five or six finishers also earn prize money.

BUYING A BROODMARE

\$ – \$\$\$

Buying a broodmare can cost anything from \$1,000 to millions

\$4 million

Hanky Panky was the most expensive broodmare sold last year, at the Tattersalls December sales

\$77,500

Average price at the Tattersalls December sales 2015

\$1.3 million? Bah!

A sister to champion filly Treve, who won the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe twice, came up for auction at Arqana in France last year. The bidding went to \$1.3 million but that was not enough and the year-old filly went back home to her breeder's stud farm, Haras du Quesnay

????

UAE Derby contender Polar River, who won the 1000 Guineas and Oaks, is already worth serious money as a future broodmare. She was purchased for only \$25,000 at the Keeneland Sales in Kentucky as a yearling



GETTING THE STALLION

\$ – \$\$\$

Derby-winners are future stallions and the going rate can be in millions

\$4 million

2000 Kentucky Derby winner Fusaichi Pegasus' price

\$11,000

The amount 2012 Kentucky Derby winner I'll Have Another fetched as a yearling

\$2.2 million

The price valuation on the current Kentucky Derby favourite, unbeaten colt Mohaymen

DOWN TO BUSINESS

\$ – \$\$\$

There are hundreds of stallions to choose from, and their covering fees typically start at around \$10,000

\$300,000

What it costs to have a broodmare covered by Tapit, one of the world's most expensive stallions, at Gainesway Farm in Kentucky

\$178,000

The price to send a broodmare to the legendary stud Frankel at Juddmonte Farms in England

TRAINING COSTS

\$ – \$\$\$

Most breeders send their yearlings to the sales, where a vast portion are sold at a loss. Many so-called owner/breeders keep their yearlings and send them to be trained. The price depends on the trainer chosen and where the horse will race



\$40,000 – \$60,000

Annual training fees in the US



£25,000 – £35,000

Annual fees in England

Dh5,500/month

The fees at Satish Seemar's Zabeel Racing Stables. Training fees in Dubai are generously subsidised by the Maktoum family, making the UAE one of the best countries in the world for racehorse owners. This excludes monthly veterinary bills, which can be between Dh350 and Dh1,000



Case Study THE BILL

\$40,700

Cost of breeding and raising a yearling

\$20,000

Around what it could set you back to have the mare covered by a stallion that suits her bloodlines

13 months

The period used to calculate breeding costs — the 11 months before the foal is born, plus two months before the broodmare is pregnant again

\$5,850

The cost of boarding and feeding — North American boarding and feeding prices for mares can vary from \$300 to \$600 a month, an average of \$450 over 13 months

\$300

Veterinary costs for routine visits, assuming nothing is wrong with the mare

\$300

Farrier costs. Broodmares do not need shoes, but their hooves will still need care (trimming, etc.) about ten times during the period

\$2,000

The cost of insuring a broodmare worth about \$50,000 for 13 months

18 months

It's a big day when the foal is born, hopefully healthy and well. It's also a day when additional costs land on the table. It will take a year and a half before the foal is old enough to be sold — or sent to a trainer if you keep the horse

\$9,000

Boarding and feeding prices for weanlings and yearlings over 18 months

\$500

A foal's farrier costs

\$2,750


The cost of insurance, should you put the foal's value the same as its mum's

PICTURES: SHUTTERSTOCK, GETTY AND CORBIS

Men in the saddle

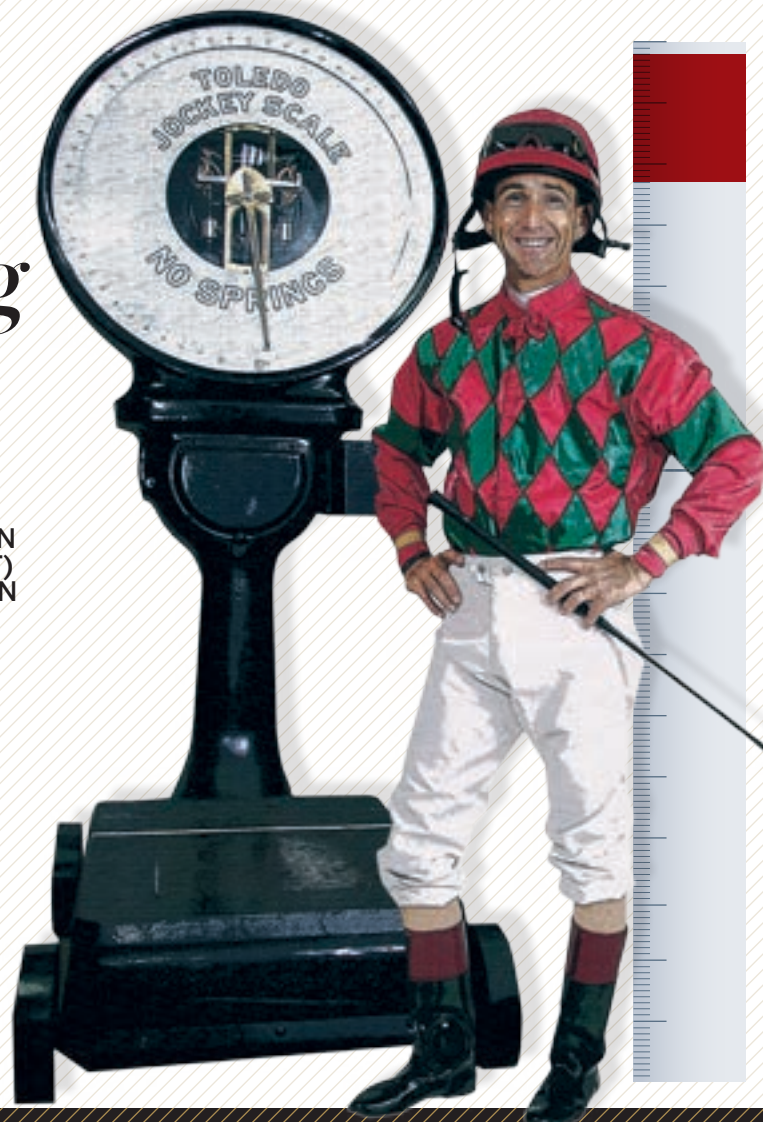
Everyone focuses on the steed, but it takes a special person to ride said steed to victory. Here are a few factoids about the riders

BY EDUAN R. MAGGO EDITOR — COUNTRY GUIDES


49–54kg
THE AVERAGE WEIGHT
OF A JOCKEY

54.5kg
DWC WEIGHT RESTRICTION
(JOCKEY AND EQUIPMENT)
ON 3-YEAR-OLD SOUTHERN
HEMISPHERE HORSES


57kg
WEIGHT RESTRICTION
ON HORSES AGED
4 AND ABOVE



**1.47m–
1.68m**
AVERAGE HEIGHT,
ALTHOUGH THIS
ISN'T LIMITED


**\$1
million**
JOCKEY PURSE
AT THE DWC

Around
\$2,000
THE AVERAGE COST
OF KIT WORN
BY A JOCKEY



4
‘Record’ DWC wins, held
by American jockey
Jerry Bailey



42*
Irishman Tadhg O'Shea's wins
this season, making him the favourite
for the UAE jockey's title
(*correct at the time of going to press)



2012
The year Chantal Sutherland
became the first woman to
ride in the 'DWC'



43
The 'DWC' favourite
California Chrome rider
Victor Espinoza's age

PICTURES: CORBIS AND GETTY

Feast for the senses

Food and beverage are added attractions at Meydan. The numbers tell you why

BY SANAYA PAVRI SPECIAL TO GN FOCUS

From caviar and lobsters to Arab specialities and international flavours, it's a vast hospitality team that fuels everyone at the Dubai World Cup. According to Meydan Hospitality, planning for DWC 2016 started the day after DWC 2015, with the majority of partners appointed and contracted in September last year. Here are a few numbers.

364

The number of days planning
to ensure everyone is fed and
hydrated on race-day

6,000

The number of royals, VTPs and
hospitality guests the company
is responsible for, in addition
to operating Meydan Hotel at
maximum capacity

18,000

The number of people catered for.
Meydan Hospitality partners with
other hotel brands to deliver and
maintain its standards

28

The number of drink
outlets and food retailers
responsible for the crowd
in the public areas or
Apron Views

10,000

The number of people
involved in making DWC
happen, from security
to hospitality to the
equine teams

35,000kg

The amount of food
prepared for race-day,
including 2,500kg of smoked
salmon and 3,000kg
of beef fillet

8,000+

When it comes to
everyone's favourite fizzy
beverage, these many
bottles of bubbly
are popped



SHUTTERSTOCK

Feathers, flowers, fascinators

Competition may be fierce between the thoroughbreds on turf, but among guests it's the fashionable who stand out. And any true fashionista will tell you that no ensemble is complete without that hat

BY SANAYA PAVRI SPECIAL TO GN FOCUS



8-20hrs

Tori Single of Vivienne Morgan Millinery says this is how long it generally takes to create a single piece, not counting the drying time between the various stages of production



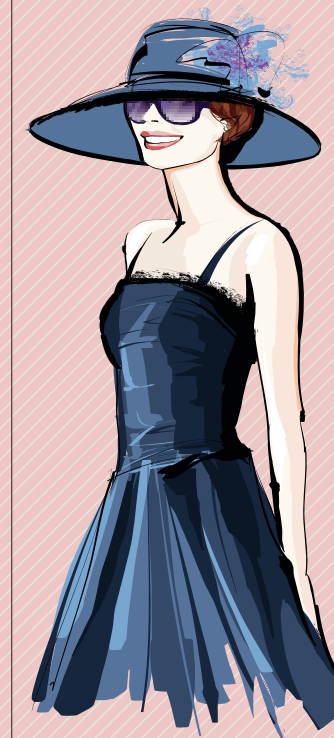
Outrageous orders

- A hat looking like a lollipop
- Another like a basket of candy
- A silk hat in the shape of an enormous clam, with a pearl and diamanté-encrusted ball at the centre



40-60

This is Karen Hamilton Millinery's annual output of hats and fascinators for the Dubai World Cup, and it makes the same number for the Spring Racing in Melbourne. The order book sees about another 20 pieces for Ascot and more than two dozen for weddings throughout the year – not counting bridal headpieces



Exotic touch

Yukiko Isshiki of Demure Couture Hat uses vintage Parabuntal straws from 1970s bought from a retired milliner in London, silk organza from Italy, silk duchess satin from Switzerland, small feathers and Swarovski crystals. In Japan, there are still family-run factories that use Schöenherr weaving machines, which weave fabric at a slower speed to create incredible texture. Many known couture houses source their fabric from these factories

HOW IT HAPPENS

According to Vivienne Morgan Millinery, these are the steps to the perfect headpiece:

1

Consultation with the client, rough sketches to agree on design and materials

2

Research to acquire and purchase required materials

3

Blocking and stiffening of the hat, which involves stretching or steaming millinery material such as felt and straw over wooden blocks in the desired shape and leaving to dry

4

Shaping of the design, where the rim is wired and then the wired brim and crown are sewn together and the edges finished

5

Sew band of ribbon or lining into the inside of the hat, along with elastic or a comb to hold the hat in place

6

Create the trimmings such as hand-cut and shaped silk petals to create flowers

7

Sew trimmings on to the hat

8

Adjustments if needed when client comes to collect

Trends

Modern crown and tiara-shaped headpieces with bird cage veiling. In terms of colours, white, metallics and various shades of pale blue, pink and purple



Popular materials

Handmade flowers, silk organza ruffles, vintage horse hair braids, Swarovski beads, silk abaca, braids from India, sinamay, straw, feathers, vintage veiling, pearls, silk, stamens, Swarovski crystals, diamanté and flowers. Specialist millinery materials such as sinamay, buckram, felt and straw are sourced from London and Paris.

Price range

In Dubai, the starting price for customised hats is Dh750 and goes up to Dh3,000. In Europe, bespoke brands such as Demure Couture begin at Dh2,000 and can go up to Dh10,000.

PICTURES: SHUTTERSTOCK

Kahayfa Classic
VERSAC PY

Last year, Versac Py won the Al Maktoum Challenge Round 3, beating Af Lafah by 3¼ lengths over 2,000 metres. It was another classy performance by Versac Py, and a return to such form would put this nine-year-old in the mix on World Cup night



Godolphin Mile
SLOANE AVENUE

The runner-up in last year's Godolphin Mile might just go the distance this year



Dubai Gold Cup
STAR EMPIRE

He was third and second in the last two editions of the race. Third time lucky?



Horses to watch

Every enthusiast has his favourite horse on race night. Here are the ones to watch on Saturday



Sheema Classic
POSTPONED

The winner of the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes at Ascot in July last year stands a good chance of making a favourable impression



Al Quoz Sprint
ERTIJAAL (IRE)

The best turf sprinter seen in action in Dubai this winter has what it takes to beat the competition

Dubai World Cup
CALIFORNIA CHROME

It is impossible to say whether California Chrome will get back to his absolute best but if he does, well, the others are probably running for second...

Dubai Turf
TRYSTER

Coming off two explosive wins over this turf course, Tryster might be the main danger to the competition in the Dubai Turf

Golden Shaheen
RICH TAPESTRY

The 2014 runner-up comes on the back of a solid win at the Al Shindagha Sprint in February and is a favourite this year

UAE Derby
POLAR RIVER

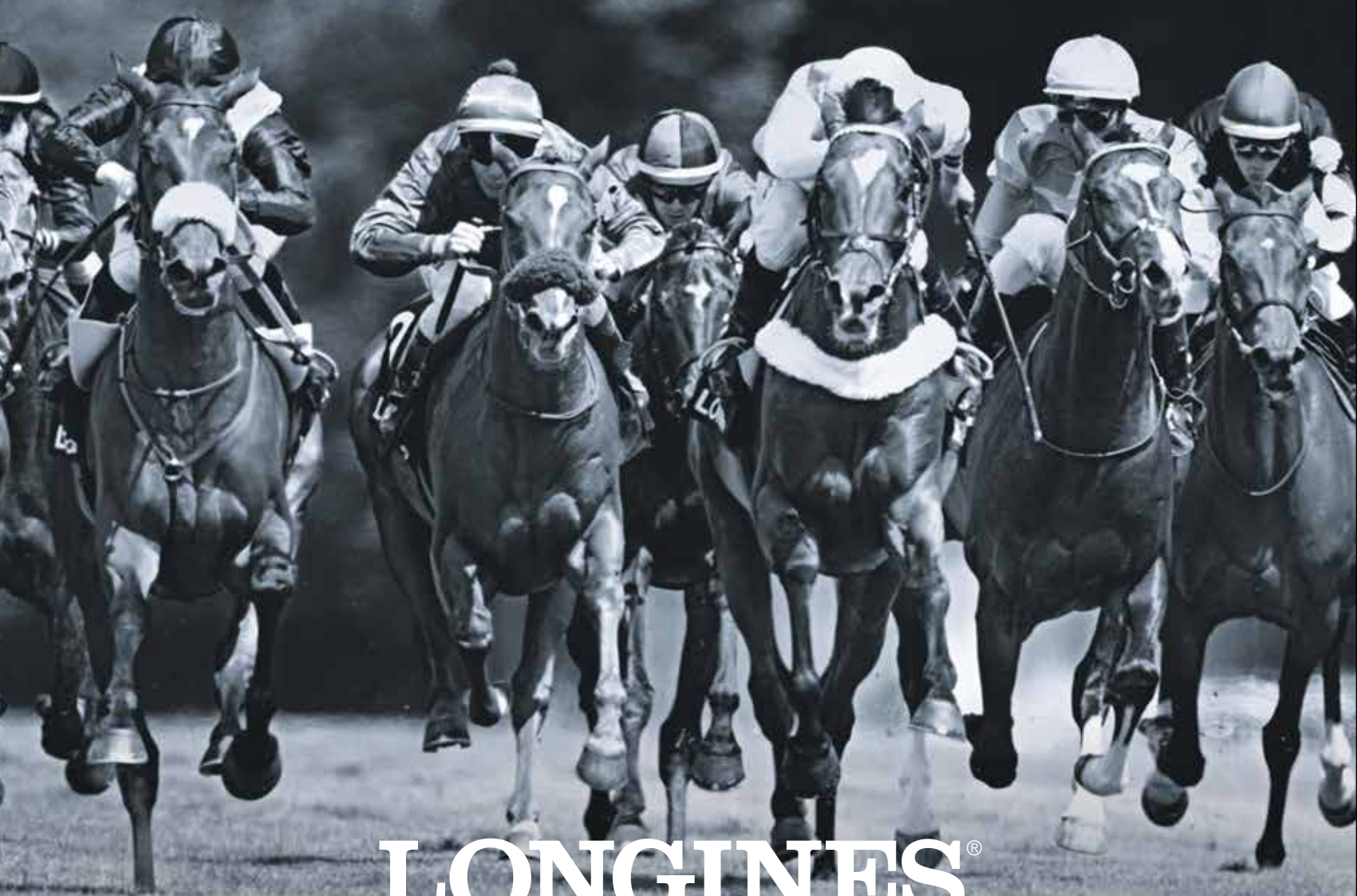
This Doug Watson-trained filly took Meydan by storm with some amazing wins at the Carnival. Polar River might just have something special for us

THE MOST AWARDED SUV EVER. JEEP® GRAND CHEROKEE



Take freedom to a new level with legendary on- and off-road capability, elegant interiors, Selec-Terrain® Traction Management, eight-speed transmission and a choice of either 3.6L V6 Pentastar™ or 5.7L V8 HEMI™ engines.

Jeep®



LONGINES®



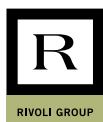
OFFICIAL TIMEKEEPER



كأس دبي العالمي
DUBAI WORLD CUP



The Longines Master Collection



RIVOLI

Visit the Longines Boutiques at:

DUBAI: Al Ghurair Center 04 295 4518 • Dubai Mall 04 339 8528 • Dubai Festival City 055 8084109
Meydan 056 3481306 • Mirdif City Centre 04 284 3604 • **ABU DHABI:** Abu Dhabi Mall 02 650 4250
Marina Mall, AUH 02 681 3419 • The Galleria, Al Maryah Island 02 650 7391

Also available at Rivoli stores throughout the UAE. Call toll free 800-RIVOLI or visit www.rivoligroup.com