The World Sports Betting International Jockey Challenge supported by Sun International and Air Mauritius will take place at the Turffontein Racecourse on 16 November this year – exactly two weeks after the final of the Rugby World Cup.

Ryno du Plessis, Marketing Director at World Sports Betting, believes the jockey challenge will create a lot of hype and support among the South African racing public as it pits a national team against the best in the world.

“And we all know that South Africans from all walks of life are united when it comes to supporting our national teams,” he said. “There will be a lot more than just a wager at stake on this raceday. It’s a matter of national pride.”

According to Du Plessis, the International Jockey Challenge is also another building block for World Sports Betting to expand their footprint in South African horseracing and a way to support the industry at a time when it needs all the support it can get.
Although World Sports Betting is heavily involved in the South African racing arena, it is the first time the bookmaker will be involved in presenting an International Jockey Challenge.

“The jockey challenge is a unique event and we feel that it fits in perfectly with our profile and with what we want to achieve,” said Du Plessis.

Sun International is also on board, taking responsibility for providing luxurious accommodation for the contestants.

“As the lifestyle partner to the jockey challenge, we will be providing accommodation for the jockeys at the Maslow Hotel in Sandton,” said Rob Dalton, Gaming Relationship Manager at Sun International.

“I’m fortunate that I know some of the international jockeys and they love coming to South Africa. Our country is still an exotic tourist destination because we have so many unique attractions.

“Sun City is one, and with the jockey challenge coinciding with the Nedbank Golf Challenge, we will definitely be taking the jockeys up to the Pilanesberg after the racing.

“The Palace is regarded as one of the most luxurious adventure destinations on the continent, so we look forward to hosting them there for a few days.

“And who knows, hopefully we’ll get an opportunity for a round on the Monday or Tuesday after the Nedbank Golf Challenge, providing their busy schedules allow it.”

According to Dalton, horseracing in South Africa still offers good value for money sponsorships thanks to the press coverage and of course Tellytrack, which broadcasts on DStv channel 239.

The South African team did the country proud at last year’s International Jockey Challenge in Singapore where Aldo Domeyer won the Individual Victor Ludorum title.

A strong showing by this year’s team is again expected.

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**RUGBY WORLD CUP 2019**

**TO WIN OUTRIGHT**

20 SEPTEMBER - 2 NOVEMBER

**PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

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*Betting World (Pty) Ltd is a licensed betting operator. No person under the age of 18 years are permitted to gamble. Winners know when to stop. National Responsible Gambling Programme toll-free counselling line: 0800 006 008*
Phumelela Gaming and Leisure recently announced that the planned closure of the Flamingo Park Racecourse in Kimberley is on hold. Although no details were made public, the company said that it is negotiating with Gold Circle and other interested stakeholders to extend racing at Flamingo Park Racecourse in Kimberley beyond December this year.

The plan was to cease racing in Kimberley on 9 December, but potentially viable options to continue racing at the venue have surfaced since then.

Phumelela CEO John Stuart said these options were now being evaluated in conjunction with Gold Circle and other stakeholders, and that more details would be released soon.
The annual spring treatment of all the racetracks on the Highveld is well underway.

“With early spring rain having already fallen, we are looking forward to terrific racing surfaces at both Turffontein and the Vaal,” says Phumelela CEO John Stuart.

“I have been to Randjesfontein, Turffontein and the Vaal personally to see the progress and get first-hand knowledge about some of the exciting initiatives that the teams are busy with.

“First and foremost among these is the significant widening of both bends at the Turffontein Inside track as well as the Vaal Classic track.

“This will give us more flexibility with rail movements to better spread the wear and tear in these critical areas, and ultimately make for much better racing all around.

“This will also create a more sweeping bend to enhance the tracks and the installation of permanent spurs/cutaways at the top of the home straights to create fairer racing too.

“This follows hot on the heels of the widening of the common pull up area at Turffontein recently.

“We have also installed a new fast sand training track at Randjesfontein while the refurbishment of the beach track at Turffontein is currently underway at a cost of R4 million. It is due for completion at the end of October.

“I must commend our Track Managers for doing such an incredible job in preparing and maintaining our turf surfaces despite the many uncontrollable factors and the often harsh Highveld weather they have to contend with.

“We are also forging plans to phase out aluminum and steel running rails at all our racing and training tracks. These are safety hazards and the plan is to replace these with a combination of specialized UV treated plastic rails and manicured hedges.”
Spring has officially sprung and the change of seasons was celebrated with fashion, friends and fun at the Race 4 Fashion Race Day at Turffontein. Fashion shows, competitions and live entertainment from DJ Kyle Cassim made for an awesome day out. Turffontein Racecourse became a fashion lovers’ paradise, complete with high-end boutiques creating a high street for your shopping pleasure.

The day was about glamour, elegance and style – and few things embody this more than athletic thoroughbred racehorses thundering past the grandstand.
The race is on for places in the R1-million Emperors Palace Ready To Run Cup (Non-Black Type) over 1400m on Saturday 2 November.

The race is restricted to eligible graduates of the 2018 Emperor’s Palace Summer Ready To Run Sales.

Last year the race was run under the auspices of Cape Thoroughbred Sales with a purse of R500,000 but the race is now back under the banner of Bloodstock South Africa (BSA). The increase in stakes this year was the product of a collective spirit of cooperation between all stakeholders, which included Emperors Palace, Phumelela, the Racing Association and BSA.

The race aims to engage the best of the three-year-olds purchased at that sale and in order to achieve that goal, the handicappers will be producing a weekly log of the best performers.

The field size will be limited to 16 runners plus two reserve runners. The final field will be determined by a panel appointed by the racing operator.

Topping the latest log is Visionaire filly Spiritofthegroove who is trained by Sean Tarry. She is a winner of one race and has placed in three other features. She has a merit rating of 106. There is a tie for second place and that is shared by Gaian Glory, trained by Gary Alexander, and Seemyvision, who is under the care of Roy Magner.

It is also good to see horses from all over the country are on the log, including KZN-based Enjoy The View, trained by Michael Roberts, and Yvette Bremner-trained Blushing Bride, who is based in Port Elizabeth.

It is also interesting to note that currently 17 of the top 27 on the log are fillies.

All the horses will carry 60kg but there will be a northern hemisphere allowance as well as a sex allowance of 2.5kg.
Mike de Kock Racing recently launched a new-look website – a fourth “facelift” as he calls it, but it’s much more than just a cosmetic change.

Here is how this multiple champion trainer describes their online efforts over close on a decade and a half.

“We launched the original Mike de Kock Racing website in December 2004, one of the first of its kind in South Africa, not far behind the rest of the world. Remember, we even had tipping services on the first one, and it took a day or two to encode and post videos!

“I venture to say we’ve been a trendsetter in the last 15 years and our almost 5,500 followers on Twitter go a long way to prove that – by no means a record but here, in South Africa, the biggest following of all the racing sites.

“This is our fourth ‘facelift’ in this period – we’ve tried to move with the trends but this last move to a new look and platform hasn’t been easy because we have been plagued in the last several months by hackers who have made things tricky with their worms and viruses. I am told we have this under control now, so we’ll be tweeting our links more often like we did in the past.

“The new site is more condensed, without a few of our older features but still containing the essentials. Our old galleries, articles and photos will remain on the old site – we have put a link to those on our menu.

“This site will be a work in progress, like the ones that came before. The major difference, and yes, we are a few years behind in this but better late than never – is that our new site is ‘responsive’. I am no expert but again, am told, in short, that this means that the site is much more flexible and easier to read on smart phones, now used by as much as 75% of all website surfers.

“We at Mike de Kock racing are on the verge of exciting times and new developments and we trust that you will continue to support us. Feel welcome to participate, comment like you always did. Thank you.”

Check out the new site at https://mikedekockracing.com/