

CARRYOVER

Clairwood Sunday Quartet (Race 8):

Estimated Pool
R1million**THE RACEGOER**

KEEPING YOU ON THE RIGHT TRACK

CARRYOVER

Soccer 10 (Betting Code SJJ) Saturday

Estimated Pool
R1.5million

Goosen looks to Jolly Poppins

MICHAEL CLOWER

BIG race ace Piere Strydom flies into Cape Town tomorrow primarily to partner Jolly Poppins for Louis Goosen in the Champagne Stakes at Kenilworth.

The Vaal trainer, who reckons a decade has gone by since he last had a runner here, has been planning for this race with all the intensity of Graeme Smith in a test match. "The mare has been in Cape Town since the middle of June," he explains. "She doesn't like the firm Gauteng going and she is not that good on sand either so I reckoned the

Cape winter with all the rain would be the ideal opportunity for her.

"When she ran behind Ebony Flyer in the SA Fillies Sprint the course had been watered and was quite hard underneath the top inch. A lot of horses didn't enjoy that and she was one of them.

"But I thought she would have a chance on her previous fifth to Wekwitschia in a Grade 2 as she came from too far off them and was flying at the end."

However two things have gone against Goosen's filly.

Her prep run, the Crimson Blossom three

weeks ago, was rained off and she has been drawn 12. Recent running on the sprint course has given low numbers a significant advantage.

Justin Snaith, who has won two of the two of the last nine Champagnes, runs both Comtesse Dubois and Ocean's Swift and, although both are returning from a break, the former's three length-fifth to Ebony Flyer at Scottsville makes her the form horse.

"She is a class filly and she is the fitter of the pair but I don't know how suited she will be to heavy ground," Snaith cautions. "It

looks like being very wet. Indeed we could be lucky to race whereas Ocean's Swift will be alright in the conditions."

Comtesse Dubois looks like starting favourite but, statistically at least, that is a negative. There has not been a winning favourite in this race for 12 years and half the last ten runnings have been won by a horse starting at 10-1 or more.

Vaughan Marshall has not won this for ten years but, significantly, he is confident that neither a three-month absence nor the ground will worry Captain's Emblem. "She will be fit enough and she is 100% OK in the soft."

However Mike Stewart has reservations about Jean's Pride, next best on ratings "She doesn't really handle heavy going, and both gale force winds and rain are forecast."