

Liberation Trebles

A good crowd turned out for the Jersey Race Club's Liberation meeting and they were treated to 7 races in glorious sunshine at a breezy Les Landes.

The day kicked off with two pony races, kindly sponsored by Amy Builders and Heritage Joinery, and the third year in a row that this has now been a feature of the Jersey racing season. It provides a perfect platform for those wishing to be stars of the future, and provides much excitement for all the friends and family involved with the children racing.

3 went to post for the first race over 4 furlongs, which was restricted to smaller ponies under 138cm in height. Fine Tsunami under Tilly Leng jumped off in the lead, but was soon overtaken by Zavier Powell on Foxglove with Southey's Casanova held up. Turning into the straight Fox Glove weakened leaving Fine Tsunami to take up the running, but not for long. Under an intelligent ride Southey's Casanova under Eden Powell shot 3 lengths clear up the inside rail, a distance which was maintained to the line from FINE Tsunami with Foxglove back in third.

5 went to post for the second pony race, which was over 5 1/2 furlongs and restricted to ponies under 148cm. As the field circled at the start the Condor Liberation appropriately made a rare appearance in the back ground. Fabians Destiny a previous winner at Les Landes was sent off the 1/2 favourite under Menna Moyse. Held up in last for the early part of the race all seemed to be going to plan for Fabians Destiny as he swept in to the lead turning in to the straight, however the stylish Victoria Malzard from the Malzard racing dynasty was hot on his heels and drew level with just over a furlong to go before pulling away to win by 2 lengths. Third was Ravenside Princess under Tess Williams and Aimee Perchard was 4th on Ballysheil Lough with Hannah Fennell 5th on Grandstand Acrobat.

After the excitement of the pony racing it was back to business as usual, and the next race was the 4 runner George & Leonora Sullivan Perpetual Hurdle over 2 miles. The field was reduced to three before a hurdle had even been jumped as the talented but precocious Reach Out refused to join the others after cantering down and planting himself at the bottom of the home straight. With just 3 runners remaining and none particularly keen to make the running, the first circuit was run at a pedestrian gallop set by the 4/7 favourite Red Four under Mattie Batchelor. Passing the winning post for the second time the pace increased which caught Dalmo, new to Jersey, a little flat footed and he had to be pushed along momentarily to hold his position with Pomander under Josh Baudains a close third. Approaching 3 out Red Four began to open up a clear advantage, with both jockeys behind him hard at work. Although not fluent at the final two flights Red Four went on to score an easy victory, with Pomander catching Dalmo for second right on the line.

The next race was the Mr Christopher Edwards CIRHC Handicap over 5 furlongs for which 7 went to post. A bit of a ragged start saw Purley Queen the 2/1 favourite get off to a 3 length flier, however the jockey decided the horse needed a lead and was happy to restrain the mare and let Country Blue under Tim Clark take up the running, with Spanish Bounty and Chester Slittlegem close up. Country Blue led into the straight where he kicked for home, but Purley Queen was travelling well having saved herself early on, but still had 2 lengths to make up. Brought to the stand side rail by Freddie Tett she drew level with Country Blue about half a furlong out before winning by a length going away from Country Blue with Brown Velvet the 3 year old running promisingly to pip Spanish Bounty for third. The win proved a poignant one with one of Purley's owners Stephen Milsom a long time supporter of Jersey racing having sadly passed away the previous Saturday.

The feature race on the card was The 2015 Jersey Guineas over a mile and 100 yards kindly sponsored in part by St Catherine's Breakwater cafe. This saw a field of 9 go to post, with the English trained George Baker ridden by Mattie Batchelor a short 1/2 favourite after a recent win at Kempton. Rossetti under the locally born Tim Clark jumped off in front closely attended to by Movementneverlies ridden by Mark Quinlan, and the free running Benoordenhout in third. 4 furlongs out and Rossetti who generally races over further began to find the pace too hot and the field was led in to the straight by Movementneverlies, closely followed by George Baker (the horse not the Trainer) and the smooth travelling Pas D'Action under Gemma Marshall a length behind. Having got first run George Baker maintained the length advantage all the way to the line from Pas D'Action in second with Hawaiian Freeze at 20/1 running on well to take a promising third for trainer James Moon and local jockey Josh Baudains.

Fourth race on the card was The HMS Iron Duke Handicap for which 9 went to post, amongst them River Du Nord. River Du Nord was jointly owned by Jane Edgar and Johnny Mercier, sadly Johnny passed away a week ago today. Johnny was an ever present stalwart of Jersey racing, and in an unprecedented mark of respect all the jockeys rode with black armbands in a touching tribute for this much loved and missed character. At the business end the hard pulling Steely jumped off in front under Philip Prince with King Kenny and Fourni sitting second and third and Ancient Greece close up. The order remained the same until the field headed down the back straight, four furlongs out and Ancient Greece closely followed through by King Kenny took up the running from Steely who came under pressure. On the heels of these two the Christa Gilbert trained Aussie Lyrics travelled well in to third. Turning into the straight and Batchelor was throwing everything at Ancient Greece, and had he steeled a glance behind he would

have seen just how well Aussie Lyrics was travelling under Freddie Tett. Tett barely had to move a muscle to ease past Ancient Greece for a very impressive 2 length victory on this new Jersey recruit with Steely keeping on well into third. In what appeared a truly run race it was an striking performance with the field well strung out, and although it was French recruits Aussie Lyrics first run in Jersey it will be very interesting to see if this performance is repeated, and surely connections must have one eye on the Derby. The win brought up a double on the day for Jersey trainer Christa Gilbert after the earlier win of Purley Queen.

The final race of the day the La Verte Rue Handicap over 1 mile 1 furlong saw 6 go to post in what was a low level affair for horses rated 55 or less. Among them were Grey Panel an impressive winner here at Easter, and Carrera a new recruit for the Malzard yard. Jumping off the running was made by Lady Petrus under jockey Philip Prince, with Grey Panel in second and Lively Little Lady showing up well in third. This order remained for the first half of the race where Lively little Lady struck the front under Nora Looby, this effort was short lived though and it was Grey Panel who led in to the home straight closely followed by the improving Lucifers Shadow under treble seeking Mattie Batchelor. Carrera had scooted up the inside rail and it was left for these two to fight out the final furlong, and it was Lucifers Shadow who held the aces and ran on gamely to win by 2 lengths from Carrera, Lady Petrus ran on again into third and will be of significant interest over a longer trip. This win completed a treble on the day for both Mattie Batchelor and a wonderful first treble for trainer Christa Gilbert.

The next race meeting at Les Landes is on 24th May.