

ALICE LANDS WONDERFUL TREBLE JERSEY RACING - REPORT By Mark Johnson

Aside from all the hats, glamour and fashionistas in the racecourse enclosures - on the track itself - two ladies in particular dominated the Jersey Race Club's popular annual Ladies Day meeting on Sunday.

Three winners, in consecutive races, on the five race card for jockey Alice Mills and trainer Christa Gilbert not only stole the show in front of a huge crowd, on a gorgeous day in St Ouen, but also gave both ladies a great chance of landing their respective Jockeys' and Trainers' Championships at the end of the local season next month.

With just two meetings (and therefore ten races) of the season left to be run, Alice Mills is now just one winner behind Jockeys Championship leader Paddy Aspell (*see the tables below*). The two riders have completely dominated the season - between them winning 21 of the 35 races run so far at Les Landes in 2017.

However it was a frustrating Sunday for Paddy Aspell. His five mounts best yielded only a third-placed ride in the final race - the first time this year that Aspell hasn't ridden at least one winner on a card.

The treble for St Helier-based Christa Gilbert all-but sealed her first Channel Islands Trainers Championship with her now five winners clear of 13 times, and reigning, Champion Aly Malzard.

On a generally good day for punters, all three of the Mills/Gilbert winning treble were well supported starting in the second race with Chapeau Bleu (backed into 3/1 from double that price early), Lucifers Shadow (6/4 favourite) and Brown Velvet (13/8 favourite).

On a card consisting of five handicaps, LUCIFERS SHADOW took the most valuable prize of the day - the Coutts Feature Handicap Mile. The ghostly grey 8 year-old was winning for the eighth time, in his 41 race career, and it was also the second win of the year for him having won a similar race on his seasonal reappearance in April.

Here he cruised through the race, but then had to battle hard close home, to beat the rallying Hawaiian Freeze a head with veteran 10 year-old George Baker (running in his last race before a well earned retirement) a further 4 lengths back in third.

“He has back problems”, reported trainer Christa Gilbert of Lucifers Shadow, “Therefore we’ve had to give him a break as he can’t run on really firm ground. Conditions were perfect for him today”.

Thirty-five minutes earlier CHAPEAU BLEU initiated the team’s treble with victory in the Ladbrokes Bet Live In Play Handicap over 7 furlongs. This was the filly’s first win of the season and she was bouncing back to form after a disappointing run here on Derby Day last time out. In a race in which the early pace somewhat collapsed, she stayed on strongly to beat National Service 2 lengths.

BROWN VELVET completed the treble with arguably a personal best performance to take the ultra-competitive eight-runner Ladbrokes Ladies Day Handicap over 1m2f by 2 lengths from Benoordenhout. This was her first try at a race distance as far as a mile-and-a-quarter but she saw it out really well to record her second win of the campaign.

Five went to post for the longest race of the entire Channel Islands season - the 2m4f Ladbrokes Betstation Handicap Hurdle. The stamina test was won by BOWL IMPERIOR ridden by Freddie Tett. Although he was a dual winner over in France earlier in his career this was a belated first win in the Channel Islands for Bowl Imperior after numerous placed efforts including when runner-up in last year’s Jersey Derby on the flat. Bowl Imperior led home a 1-2 for trainer Aly Malzard beating stablemate Fourni by 8 lengths with UK-trained raider Daliane in third.

Final race on the card, the 1m4f Ladbrokes Best odds Guaranteed Handicap, produced a UK-trained winner. BARWICK, making his Channel Islands debut, made all the running under Mattie Batchelor for trainer George Baker. Three-time Jersey Derby winner Aussie Lyrics was 3 lengths away back in second - the third year running that he has been beaten in this corresponding race having previously won the Jersey Derby at the end of last month.

The next meeting at Les Landes is on August Bank Holiday Monday, 28th August, when the feature race will be the most prestigious handicap of the season - The Clarendon Handicap over 1m4f. First race 2.30pm.

2017 Channel Islands Jockeys Championship

Paddy Aspell	11 winners
Alice Mills	10
Mattie Batchelor	3
Jemma Marshall	3
Philip Prince	3

2017 Channel Islands Trainers Championship

Christa Gilbert	11 winners
Aly Malzard	6
Karl Kukk	5

2017 Leading Horses

Captain James	3 wins
Steely	3
7 horses have	2 wins