

KUKK'S SALAD WINS MAIN SPRINT
JERSEY RACING - JERSEY BULLET MEETING REPORT
By Mark Johnson

It was rather like watching a sprint Final at the Olympic Games rather than a horse race - six horses lined-up side-by-side across the track with just a furlong (200m) to run at the end of Sunday's Millbrook 2019 Jersey Bullet Handicap - the most important sprint of the Channel Islands racing season - at Les Landes Racecourse.

Even at the winning line only 4 lengths split first to last in the field but crucially it was in that final furlong that **FRUIT SALAD**, trained near to track in St Ouen by Karl Kukk and ridden by Mark Quinlan, surged to the lead to pull 2¾ lengths clear of the runner-up, UK-trained raider, **MAN OF THE SEA** with three-time "Bullet" winner **COUNTRY BLUE** just a further neck back in third.

FRUIT SALAD, who runs in the colours of owners Tim Loretto and Neil Carter, was a 3/1 chance in the field of six (hat-tricking seeking 3 year-old **WOLF HUNTER** was sent off the 11/8 Favourite) and she completed Sunday's 5½ furlong (1,100m) race in 1m10.3secs - which equates to approximately an average speed of 35mph.

Six year-old mare **FRUIT SALAD** was recording her fourth career success, her other victories coming in the UK over 5f (1,000m). Although previously unsuccessful since moving to Jersey she had run some excellent races in defeat including when runner-up to Country Blue in this race twelve months ago. She had finished third in both her prep runs for this target so far this season.

After some heavy rain in the week running up to Sunday's meeting the racing surface was described as "perfect good ground" by several senior riders and it certainly suited **FRUIT SALAD** who has consistently shown a liking for rain-softened ground.

Leading UK-based jump jockey Sam Twiston-Davies paid his first ever visit to Les Landes on Sunday and left having registered the 1,000th winner of his career. After 996 wins in the UK, two in Ireland and one in France, the milestone victory came aboard **MOLLIANA** in the concluding Green Valley Handicap over 1m2f.

This was a second win of the season on Jersey for 4 year-old filly Molliana, having won over slightly shorter on 12 May, but in the meantime things have hardly been plain sailing.

At the previous Les Landes meeting, on 27 May she had slipped up on the paddock turn taking a nasty looking fall. None-the-worse for that spill she (and her three stablemates from the Neil Mulholland yard in the UK due to run at this meeting) had a nightmare journey to the island, mainly due to the bad weather in the Channel, and they eventually only arrived in St Helier port at 7:30am on Sunday morning.

Trainer Aly Malzard and amateur rider Freddy Tett maintained their respective leads in the Trainer and Jockey Championships (at the half-way point of the Channel Islands racing season) with the victory of **BOWL IMPERIOR** in the opening Verte Rue Associates Handicap Hurdle. Tett produced his mount with a perfectly timed challenge, from last to first, in a very strongly run 2¼ mile contest.

BOWL IMPERIOR was the C.I. Champion racehorse in 2017 when he won four times and he is a leading candidate to secure that title again at the end of this season as he is now a perfect 3 out of 3 so far this year - having won twice over hurdles and once on the flat.

HONCHO, also trained by Aly Malzard but ridden by her daughter Victoria, became another three-time winner this season when taking the Geoffrey Edwards Memorial Handicap over 1m½f. This was a seventh career win for **HONCHO** who is currently in the form of his life.

The Brady & Gallagher (1999) Handicap over 1½ miles went to the Tony Le Brocq-trained **WHITE VALIANT**, whose dam Minnie's Mystery won the 2003 Jersey Derby. He showed he is a major player for that race on 21st July with a hugely impressive win by 6 lengths from **ISLAND SONG**. This was also the first leg of a riding double for Mark Quinlan completed aboard **FRUIT SALAD**.