

VALIANT BOOKS DATE WITH DESTINY
FRIDAY EVENING'S JERSEY RACING REPORT
By Mark Johnson

“That horse will win the Derby”, exclaimed delighted winning rider Mark Quinlan as he returned to weigh-in after the success of **WHITE VALIANT** at Les Landes Racecourse on Friday evening.

The longest day of the year saw the Jersey Race Club stage the first of its two popular evening meetings and, in perfect mid-summer weather conditions for viewing both racing and the incredible sunset afterwards, a big enthusiastic crowd saw **WHITE VALIANT** register his third win of the season.

Although his official margin of victory, in the appropriately named Mid-Summer Glorious Les Landes Handicap was only three-quarters-of-a-length, it was fact that he had conceded 33lbs to the runner-up **KENOUGHTY** and 24lbs to the third-placed **SAFIRA MENINA** (who herself was third in last year's Jersey Derby) which made the performance impressive.

In a steadily run 1½ mile race, in which the five-strong field were tightly packed for much of the contest, the winner (sent off the 4/5 Favourite) quickened up to take the lead on turn for home and then had to dig in to repel the late efforts of both the runner-up and third.

For the Tony Le Brocq trained 6 year-old **WHITE VALIANT**, Sunday 21st July - Jersey Derby Day - will be a date with destiny. He carries the same mauve and black colours his dam (mother) **MINNIES MYSTERY** carried when she won the Jersey Derby in 2003. His brother, out of that same brilliant race mare, **GREY PANEL** is currently the winning-most horse at Les Landes in training boasting 15 local successes.

Runner-up **KENOUGHTY**, still a maiden after 12 starts, came out of this race with tremendous credit too given he was 2lbs out of the handicap and his rider Christopher Grosbois put up an additional 2lbs overweight. The James Moon-trained 3 year-old should definitely win a race in the near future on this evidence.

WOLF HUNTER, another 3 year-old and stable companion of

KENOUGHTY in the James Moon yard, won the main race of the evening - The Quilter Cheviot Evening Feature Handicap over 1m1f, beating WILLIAM BOOTH by 3½ lengths in a field of eight.

6/4 Favourite **WOLF HUNTER** was ridden to victory by French-based jockey Davy Delande for whom this was a first winner since he injured an arm, in a spectacular fall in a steeplechase at Pontivy, on 5th May.

WOLF HUNTER himself was winning for the third time this season, all at different distances, his victory on Easter Monday coming over 7 furlongs and his Jersey Guineas win last month came over 1m½f.

Gutsy and versatile mare **MOLLIANA**, trained in the UK by Neil Mulholland, already boasts four wins in 2019 having begun her winning spree over hurdles at Fakenham in March.

She claimed her third flat win this year on Jersey with a 2 lengths success from **MENDACIOUS HARPY** in the 1m½f Marje Merick Handicap under leading UK-based jump jockey Sam Twiston-Davies.

With four meetings of the Channel Islands racing season remaining, amateur rider Freddy Tett has opened-up a clear lead in the Jockeys Championship. A double on Friday's card, aboard the Aly Malzard-trained duo **BAL AMIE** (UBS Handicap Hurdle over 2m1f) and **RELAXED BOY** (JRC Handicap over 7 furlongs) moved him on to the seven winner mark for the campaign, three clear of both Mark Quinan and reigning Champion Philip Prince on four.

The double in the first two races of the evening moved Aly Malzard on to eleven winners for the season - already six clear of Neil Mulholland on five victories. Mrs Malzard is already within touching distance of her 15th Channel Islands Trainers Championship.

* Next racing at Les Landes is another evening meeting on Friday 5th July (first race 6:30) featuring the Channel Islands Champion Hurdle.