

## **SAM STEALS SHOW FRIDAY EVENING'S HORSE RACING REPORT**

By Mark Johnson

Leading UK-based jump jockey Sam Twiston-Davies stole the show on a beautiful evening at Les Landes Racecourse on Friday when riding the first three winners on the card including **MRS BURBIDGE** in the featured Jersey Cheshire Home 2019 Channel Islands Champion Hurdle.

Having jumped well, and traveled strongly, throughout the 2m1f contest **MRS BURBDIGE** (a 15/8 chance in the classy field of five) came home an impressive 4 lengths clear of 6/5 Favourite **BARWICK** with **VERONICA'S NAPKIN** just a nose further back in third. Both **BARWICK** and **VERONICA'S NAPKIN** had filled the same finishing positions in the race twelve months ago behind Cahill.

Although this was a first win (on his first ride) in Jersey's most prestigious jumps race for Sam Twiston-Davies it was a third victory in the race for winning Wiltshire-based trainer Neil Mulholland who had previously sent out **The Bay Bandit** to win in 2014 and **Rossetti** to win in 2016.

9-year-old mare **MRS BURBIDGE**, who runs in the yellow and green silks of owner Mike Burbidge's Dajam Ltd, was taking her career tally to nine victories of which four have now come here in Jersey.

To have a jockey of the calibre of Sam Twiston-Davies regularly riding at Les Landes this season (this was his third visit of the year) has been a tremendous boost to local racing.

Few professional riders are currently as popular with their peers, or with the racing public, than Twiston-Davies. Recently he rode his 1,000<sup>th</sup> career winner - victories which have included the 2015 Queen Mother Champion Chase at the Cheltenham Festival on **Dodging Bullets**, the 2017 Scottish Grand National at Ayr on **Vincente** and, more significantly in the context of this win on Jersey, the 2016 Grande Course de Haies d'Auteuil (the French Champion Hurdle) on **Ptit Zig**.

For several seasons Twiston-Davies has been spoken of, by many experts, as a future UK Jumps Champion Jockey but before that he now has a realistic chance of becoming Champion in the Channel Islands at his first attempt. Friday evening's treble took him on to the five winner mark for the local season, just two winners behind **Freddy Tett**, with still three meetings (15 races) left of the 2019 campaign.

There was not a dry eye in the winner's enclosure after Twiston-Davies initiated

his treble with a front-running victory aboard **SWISS CROSS** in the opening Wilsons Estate Agent Handicap over 7 furlongs.

Newmarket-based trainer Phil McEntee had spotted, some time ago, this particular race in the programme book as a winnable final career start for his 12 year-old stable stalwart **SWISS CROSS**. Sent off the 11/8 Favourite the old warrior read the script for a fairytale 3½ length victory (the sixteenth of his career) from **MENDACIOUS HARPY**.

**MAN OF THE SEA** provided the middle-leg of the Twiston-Davies treble (and was also the first leg of a Neil Mulholland training double) in the Millbrook Handicap Sprint over 5½f. In a race run at a scorching pace (and completed in a sizzling 1min 08secs) most of the nine-strong field had a chance fanning out across the width of the course over a furlong from home. At the line **MAN OF THE SEA** (who winning his third sprint at Les Landes already this season) held on to beat the staying on **RELAXED BOY** by ¾ length.

The rest of the evening belonged to local trainer James Moon who saddled his own double with **WOLF HUNTER** and **KENOUGHTY** winning the final two races on the card.

**WOLF HUNTER** (ridden by French jockey Corentin Smeulders) registered his fourth victory of the season by taking the 1m2f Plantagenet Handicap by a neck from **CONTINGENCY FEE**. The 3 year-old son of Sir Prancelot has made a remarkable start to his local racing career this year - proving to be a most versatile racehorse with victories in 2019 now coming over 7f, 1m½f, 1m1f & now 1m2f. The 1m4f Jersey Derby on 21<sup>st</sup> July could be the next step up for him.

“Jersey Evening Post” racing columnist John Henwood (aka Bobsbest) was in the winner’s enclosure himself as an owner after **KENOUGHTY** broke his maiden in the concluding 1m6f Handicap. The impressive 5 length victory by **KENOUGHTY** was also a first winner on Jersey for UK-based apprentice rider George Rook. The most prestigious race of the local racing season - The Jersey Derby - is the centre-piece of the next Les Landes meeting on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July. First race 2:30pm.