

ISLAND ON SONG FOR INAUGURAL JERSEY OAKS SUNDAY'S JERSEY RACING PREVIEW

By Mark Johnson

This Sunday Les Landes Racecourse in St Ouen hosts it's annual Ladies Day with five competitive races on the track (first race 2:30) sharing the spotlight with a trio of competitions designed to bring a touch of Royal Ascot-style glamour to the picturesque cliff-top venue.

There will be competitions to find the Best Dressed Young Person, and the Most Outstanding Hat, as well as the Best Dressed Lady.

Judging will take place throughout the afternoon, with judges mingling amongst the crowd from well before the first race. The finalists in each category will be invited to go to the winner's enclosure after the last race for final judging and prize giving.

As well as the competition between fashionistas, the action on the track promises to be ultra competitive too with a brand new feature race boosting the quality of the Ladies Day card.

The Ravenscroft Jersey Oaks (3:40) will be the first race restricted to just fillies and mares run in Channel Islands for decades and has attracted a strong field of seven.

The race will be run over 1m2f (2,000m) and is also the first Limited Handicap to be run locally. That means the weights have been compressed from a spread of 35lbs to just 25lbs (top weight is reduced by 5lbs & bottom weight is raised by 5lbs) allowing the higher rated fillies and mares to not have to carry quite so much weight.

The likely favourite for the inaugural running of the Ravenscroft Jersey Oaks is MOLLIANA (trained in the UK by Neil Mulholland) who comes into the race in the form of her life. On Sunday the tough and consistent 4 year-old filly will be bidding for her sixth win in 2019.

Having won a Hurdle race in the UK in March she has since won four times at Les Landes including when impressively beating the useful Kenoughty 5 lengths over this distance in June.

Obviously the sting in the tail of enjoying a highly successful season is that the handicapper keeps making it harder for her to win and MOLLIANA now runs off a 20lbs higher rating than when she recorded her first win here in May.

ISLAND SONG, representing the St Ouen-based mother/trainer and daughter/rider team of Aly and Victoria Malzard, is the class act the field and this race has looked her ideal target ever since she set foot in Jersey.

Sunday's 1m2f may arguably end up being her optimum trip (although her local win came over 1m4f) and as long as she settles in the early stages few rivals here will quicken up better than her at the business end of the race. **ISLAND SONG** comes here after a respectable fourth to Wolf Hunter, beaten just 6¾ lengths, in the Jersey Derby last month.

Trainer Aly Malzard is also represented by **SAFIRA MENINA** who was third in last year's Jersey Derby but is now on a losing run of 25 races.

Another significant feature of Sunday's card is the likelihood of one of the biggest pools ever bet into the Pick4 Jackpot. As the bet wasn't won on Jersey Derby Day a big carry-over (£1,118.96) is in the pool before the commencement of wagering on Sunday and, given Ladies Day annually attracts one of the biggest crowds of the year at Les Landes, that could easily result in a near record Tote Pick4 Jackpot pool.

In the Pick4 Jackpot racegoers have to select the winner of race 2, 3, 4 & 5 on the card. The minimum stake per line is just £1.

The Pick4 Jackpot sequence therefore starts with Race 2 (3:05) - the Ladbrokes Bet Station handicap over 7 furlongs. The remarkable 3 year-old winning machine **WOLF HUNTER**, trained by James Moon, is likely to go off long odds-on favourite for this race. He has won five times this season, over five different distances, including the 1m4f Jersey Derby last time out. He drops dramatically down in trip here and he is now rated 23lbs higher than when he won over this distance on Easter Monday.

WOLF HUNTER may well win again but the value bet in the race appears to be **RELAXED BOY** who beat a useful UK-trained yardstick on his only local try over 7f in June and who has since run a couple of very solid races over an inadequate 5½f.

Following the Jersey Oaks the third leg of the Pick4 Jackpot is the Ladbrokes Ladies Day Handicap (4:15) in which **CAPTAIN JAMES** (trained by Christa Gilbert) has every chance of repeating his victory twelve months ago. Last year he beat **MENDACIOUS HARPY** a head and that same mare may well be one of his main rivals again this year.

The Ladbrokes Best Odds Guaranteed Handicap (4:50) over 1m4f is the final leg of the Pick4 Jackpot and sees the exciting 3 year-old **KENOUGHTY** drop back in distance after a creditable runner-up finish over 2 miles on Jersey Derby Day. The main danger would appear to be three-time Jersey Derby winner **AUSSIE LYRICS**.

As always Ladies Day opens with a Handicap Hurdle (2:30) - also

sponsored by Ladbrokes who are supporting four races on the card - in which five go to post. Neil Mulholland brings a team of four horses over for this meeting and his **MAGICAL THOMAS** looks an ideal type to make a winning Jersey debut. His best form in the UK is at tracks very similar to Les Landes (including a win at Fontwell in April) and he may be more progressive than local hurdlers BAL AMIE and BARWICK.

2019 Channel Islands Jockeys Championship

Freddy Tett	9 winners
Sam Twiston-Davies	5
Serena Brotherton	4
Mark Quinlan	4
Philip Prince	4

2019 Channel Islands Trainers Championship

Aly Malzard	13 winners
Neil Mulholland (UK)	8
James Moon	6

Sunday's Selections:

2.30	3	MAGICAL THOMAS
3.05	3	RELAXED BOY
3.40	2	ISLAND SONG
4.15	2	CAPTAIN JAMES
4.50	6	KENOUGHTY