

A wet and windy morning eventually gave way to dry weather just in time for the first race leaving ground described as soft, although it did seem better ground prevailed in places. The feature race the 2015 Jersey Derby generously sponsored by La Vallette Investment Management Limited saw a field of 8 go to post, however the betting focused around just two horses, the Malzard trained smart winner of the Champion hurdle Rossetti, and the hugely impressive Gilbert trained Aussie Lyrics. Rossetti last year's winner under a very enterprising ride was looking to carry over his very smart hurdle form. To set the tone before the race Big Buck's very kindly brought over by his sporting owner Andy Stewart had paraded around the parade ring much to the delight of the appreciative crowd. The Race Club was also pleased to play host to Big Buck's trainer and champion jumps trainer Paul Nicholls. Down at the start several horses were being less than cooperative, which led to quite a ragged start. Herbalist jumped off in front closely followed by the sometimes front running and keen Rossetti under Mattie Batchelor. Close up in behind was the Tom Marett ridden Rebel Woman and the favourite Aussie Lyrics under Freddie Tett. Passionate Affair brought up the rear just behind stablemate Carrera. Passing the judge for the first time and Rossetti and Herbalist dueled for the lead, with Rossetti travelling much the better. This duel lasted until 5 furlongs out where Rossetti was urged into a clear lead, with the Mark Quinlan ridden Herbalist struggling to keep up, and he was soon hunted down by the strongly travelling Aussie Lyrics and Carrera travelling through into fourth past a back peddling Rebel Woman. Approaching the 3 marker and Batchelor was driving Rossetti along in a bid to draw the sting out of his rival, however this was all in vain as Aussie Lyrics was still travelling supremely well under Tett and drew upsides Rossetti passing the 2 marker. Despite Rossetti's gallant effort he was no match for Aussie Lyrics who went on to win on the bridle by 7 lengths for his owners White Spot Racing. A hugely impressive performance for a horse plucked out of French claimer by Ron Vibert. This brought up a double on the day for jockey Tett and trainer Gilbert who was winning the Derby for the third time in the past 4 years.

The first race of the day was The CPA Global maiden hurdle. 4 went to post for the hurdle, with Steely under Mark Quinlan having the best recent form from the flat and hurdles, however Beck's Bolero under Freddie Tett had shown improved form last time out on the flat and just shaded favouritism from Steely. Steely jumped off in front and with the first hurdle having being removed due to safety concerns from the wind it was a long run towards what would now be the first flight. By the time they reached the first Steely had already opened up a commanding lead with Beck's Bolero some 15 lengths back in second with Fourni close up, and Granit Man already hopelessly tailed off. By the time they came past the post for the first time there was only Steely still on the bridle, Beck's Bolero was still in second but very much under sufferance as he clearly disliked the soft conditions. This left Fourni under Michelle Hooper to set off after the easy leader, but this was all in vain as Steely was allowed to coast over the final 3 hurdles to record a comfortable win for Trainer Karl Kukk and owners The Saddletramps Partnership. This was a deserved win for a horse that has been remarkably consistent without troubling the judge.

The second race saw what was anticipated to be a match between The Race Club Presidents horse Country Blue and The Manor Farm Racing Purley Queen, over 5 furlongs for The Ravenscroft Big Buck's Sprint. Making up the field of 4 was Kersivay and Movementneverlies. Kersivay jumped off in front under Jemma Marshall, with Purley Queen under Freddie Tett and Country Blue under Mattie Batchelor 2nd and 3rd and Movementneverlies bringing up the rear. Turning in and Kersivay held a 3 length lead, and it was the favourite at 4/5 Purley Queen who set off in pursuit with Country Blue struggling to make any impression back in 3rd. With a furlong to run Purley Queen had got to Kersivay's

flanks, but it still looked like the leader might hold on, but deep inside the final furlong the Gilbert trained mare eventually got on top to win by a head in a thrilling finish under what were amazingly now clear blue skies.

The final two races of the day fell to Corson trained and Crawford family owned horses, both veterans and favourites of the Jersey racing scene for many years. First up was the 11 year old Fast Freddie at 9/1 in the The Animal Health Trust Celebration Mile Handicap over 1 mile 100 yards. Favourite was Grey Panel under Richard Hodson at 2/1 closely followed by the consistent Lucifers Shadow looking for a treble on the day for Tett and Gilbert and the bookie owned Chester'Slittlegem. Jumping off and Fast Freddie was taken straight into the lead by his jockey Michelle Hooper, closely followed by Grey Panel on the inner and the strong pulling Chester'Slittlegem. Heading down the back and Fast Freddie travelled 2 lengths to the good of Grey Panel, and Pas D'Action, First Cat and Chester'Slittlegem who made a wall of 3 behind. Turning in and Grey Panel was beating a retreat and it was Lucifers Shadow and Pas D'Action who set off in pursuit of the leader. A furlong out and it was Lucifers Shadow who tried to mount a challenge, but Michelle Hooper was getting a great tune out the veteran Fast Freddie and held on under hands and heels for a 1 length win. This was Michelle's first winner, and a great advert for local based riders.

Next up was King Kenny in the EY's Building a Better Working World Handicap over 1 3/4 miles for which 5 went to post, including 2 English trained runners whom with King Kenny dominated the betting heat. Leyland jumped off in front closely attended by Dalmo under Mark Quinlan. The order remained the same heading out on to the final circuit when a driven along Dalmo was passed in to second by Lexi Grady Alice under Mattie Batchelor. Behind in 4th and 5th sat King Kenny under Mark Lawson on the outside of Lady Petrus under Tim Clark. Passing the 4 furlong marker and Batchelor was hard at work on Lexi Grady Alice, while Leyland still travelled well in the lead, and King Kenny stalked them in 3rd from the staying on Lady Petrus. Turning in and it was obvious that King Kenny was going much the best and Leyland soon came under pressure but could find no more. King Kenny was ridden out and eventually scored by an impressive 15 lengths from Lady Petrus and the staying on again Dalmo. This seemed to justify connections decision to swerve the Derby in favour of this race, and this may set up a clash against the young pretender Aussie Lyrics in the season finale the Clarendon on August 31st.

With just two meetings remaining, and the Champion Trainer and Champion Horse titles still very much up for grabs it should be an exciting end to the season. The next meeting is the ever popular Ladies Day meeting on 16th August.