

Fast ground and blue skies met the horses and race goers for Jersey Race Clubs 3rd meeting of 2016.

The feature race of the day was The La Vallette 2016 Jersey Bullet Handicap, and with the fastest horses in Jersey contesting this race then the bullet was an apt description. 6 went to post, with the Karl Kukuk trained top weight Valmina the 7/4 favourite with Country Blue and Purley Queen close behind at 2/1. The English runner Hurricane Alert jumped off in front, closely followed by a heavily restrained Country Blue under Mattie Batchelor, with Purley Queen under Alice Mills and Valmina under Nick Slatter 3rd and 4th. The order remained the same for the first half of the race as a furious pace was set by the English challenger, but rounding the bottom bend the Alyson Malzard trained Country Blue swept around the outside with the others struggling to go the pace. Approaching the furlong marker, and with Batchelor only just getting to work on the leader it looked like a comfortable victory was on the cards, however, the Christa Gilbert trained Purley Queen was making ground up the stands rail, while Valmina was staying on strongly up the centre and this duo began to rapidly eat into the leader's advantage. Come to the line though and the leader held on by a rapidly diminishing head to Valmina, with Purley Queen a short head behind in third.

The day kicked off with The Presidents Hurdle over 2 and a quarter miles, for which 5 went to post. Top of the betting at 11/8 was the Ron Vibert owned, and Christa Gilbert trained imposing Cahill, a good second on his debut on the flat at the last meeting. On that occasion, he was beaten by the Alyson Malzard trained Fourni, who opposed again today but at a turnaround in the weights which was reflected in the odds with Fourni trading at 11/4. Jumping off the newcomer Drum Valley held the rail, with the Karl Kukuk trained Dalmo under Philip Prince on his outer, with the favourite given good sight of his hurdles towards the rear. Heading down the back for the first time and Drum Valley was already not taking to his new surroundings, and he was soon passed by the hard pulling Fourni under Michelle Hoper with Dalmo now taking the lead on the inner. Approaching what would be the last in a circuit Fourni was given her head and took the lead from Dalmo who was running at full throttle, while the Moon trained Granit man took third under Richard Condon. Approaching 4 out and the field were tightly grouped, and the favourite jumped passed Drum Valley and made smooth headway to take the third last in second place. Heading into the home straight and Fourni started to turn the screw, but this was matched by the smooth travelling Cahill under Alice Mills, while Granit Man who had run well started to come under pressure and was passed by the staying on again Dalmo. Two out and Cahill jumped nearly upside the leader and then ran on to take the lead approaching the last where a good jump sealed the victory as he went on to win cosily by 5 lengths, with Dalmo staying on very well to take second from Fourni.

The second race on the cards was the 1 1/2 mile The Geoffrey Edwards Memorial Handicap, for which 8 went to post with Aussie Lyrics the evens favourite. The English-trained Wicked Tara jumped off in the lead, and was followed by the Guernsey trained Foiled, and Aussie Lyrics prominent in 3rd. Despite not handling the top bend particularly well Wicked Tara led out onto the final circuit, with not much change in behind. Passing their starting point, and Aussie Lyrics had moved into second while the James Moon trained Black Night under Shaun Payne was quickly moved into third on the outer, with Spring Dixie and King Kenny making ground in behind. Turning in and Philip Prince was throwing the kitchen sink at Wicked Tara, while Black Night swung around the outside of the still strong travelling Aussie Lyrics. Approaching the furlong marker and Black Night had opened up a 3 length lead, as the favourite seemed to be caught flat-footed. This advantage was maintained to the

line, with the favourite eventually managing only 4th behind the staying on Mr Oppulance and King Kenny showing a return to form in 3rd under Nora Looby.

The 4th race on the card was The Whitsun Handicap Mile with 6 going to post. Jumping off and the Tony Le Brocq trained and Tim Clark ridden Benoordenhout narrow favourite at 5/2 was sent into the lead, closely tracked by Brown Velvet and the grey Lucifers Shadow. Heading down the back and the Karl Kukk trained Brown Velvet sought to apply pressure to the leader but had to be driven to do so, but with the benefit of the inside rail the leader maintained his position entering the straight. Moving up the inside rail, the evergreen Pas D'Action under Jemma Marshall, and despite initially been pinned in she finally angled her charge out to try to mount a challenge to the leader. Having drawn upsides the leader, however, the chestnut had no more to give, and Benoordenhout stayed on strongly to win going away again by 1 1/2 lengths. This was progressive form from the winner who appeared to pull very hard during the early part of the race and was impressive in the way he won here.

The final race of the day saw the biggest field, with 10 going to post for The Crawford Family Handicap over 1 1/4 miles. Heading the betting was Captain James at 5/4, and the favourite maintained a prominent position for the best part of the race. Steely, as usual, set out to make the running from the favourite, with the hard pulling Fast Freddie on the outer with Hawaiian Freeze tracking the front 3. Approaching 5 out and Steely gave way as Captain James took the lead with Fast Freddie upsides on his outer. Turning into the straight and Fast Freddie's stamina began to give out, and it was Hawaiian Freeze under Richard Condon who loomed large on the leaders outside turning in and eventually won the battle for the lead approaching the furlong marker. From the pack the popular Grey Panel was sent in pursuit up the inside rail, while the enigmatic Lady Petrus started to stay on with real purpose from the pack with Carrera. Inside the final half furlong and Lady Petrus was bearing down on the leader, but the line arrived just in time for Hawaiian Freeze who scraped home by a head at odds of 8/1, with the second double this at 16/1. This success brought up a double on the day for trainer James Moon.

The next meeting is the ever popular Friday evening meeting on June 17th.