

Four meetings into the season the weather finally relented as The Jersey Race Club's held it's Diamond Jubilee meeting at Les Landes on Monday, as the dire conditions that had seen meagre attendances at the previous meetings were not repeated this time and given the number of other events being held to honour the Queen's elongated reign, Race Club officials will be heartened by the large turnout with racegoers witnessing some of the closest finishes of the season to date.

The afternoon's proceedings started with the running of **The Rowlands Recruitment Handicap Hurdle**, Landolino an impressive winner of the conditional maiden hurdle at the previous and Fine The World a winner on the flat and over hurdles so far this season dominated betting exchanges, however once the latter arrived at the start she decided to show her mulish character digging her hooves in and despite the urgings of jockey Tim Clarke and the starters assistants just stood and watched the field set off when the tapes went up, indeed such was her obstinacy she was still in the same area of the course as the field completed two full circuits of the track. With his main market rival refusing to compete race favourite Landolino once again gave an impressive display of front running jumping and came home an unchallenged ten length winner from proven stayer Nordic Affair with Les Landes debutant Monkhair a now stablemate of the winner a further fifteen lengths back in third. Next meeting sees the running of the CI Champion Hurdle and whilst Landolino maybe a novice having only had to outings over hurdles, the Joan Le Brocq trained seven year olds outings have both resulted in emphatic wins and his jumping has been most impressive, so he looks to be the one who will give defending Champion Hurdler Anfield Road most to do in order to defend his crown.

Second race of the afternoon **The Plantagate Handicap** saw the Alyson Malzard trained Neuilly hold off the challenges of Anfield Road and Lang Shining to win by a length and a head. The winner had impressed two meetings ago when she beat none stayer Fast Freddie and co by a sizeable margin before not acting on the rain softened ground at the last meeting, however given more suitable conditions she once again saw off the opposition and whilst the eventual winning distances would suggest a close finish she always had the measure of her closest rivals and appears to be in front of the handicapper.

Another horse who appears to be well ahead of the handicapper is Toggle who won **The Brighter Futures** over five furlongs. Having already won from outside the handicap two meetings ago the Angie Corson trained eight year old once again took advantage of the handicapper leniency to just see off the challenge of veteran High Voltage and long time leader Kersivay by two short heads in what would normally of been the closest finish of the day. When taking the form of the race into account punters would be wise to take two points into account, firstly the fact that once again Kersivay who had been the cause of a false start first time round as jockey Mattie Batchelor attempted to steal a march on his rivals as the runners were called into line was still able to poach a lead second time around as the field were let go, over five furlongs a two or three length advantage at the start can make all the difference at the business end, so in order to have a level playing field it would appear that the starter and his assistance need to be more vigilant in order to give all runners an equal chance and punters a fair deal. Secondly Toggle has now won two races this season from outside the handicap this time carrying nine pounds more than his allotted weight so any increase of less than ten pounds for this win will mean that he will effectively have gone unpunished on the handicap front for two victories.

Trainer Corson and jockey Sophie Doyle made it a double on the card when Becks Bolero won **The Supporters Handicap**, the winner took full advantage of the genuine early pace set by stable companion Fast Freddie to see off the late challenge of another of this seasons improvers Major Maximus who appeared to be given a hands and heels ride by pilot Tim Clark failing to get up by only a length with Superduper two lengths back in third. There were however three major disappointments in the race

First Cat, Spanish Bounty and Norwegian Reward all arrived in the Island at the start of the season and have been subject to favourable reports, however to date whilst the former has shown a little bit of form in his previous outings the other two have shown little and on this occasion all three were never sighted with a chance so are best watched in the immediate future.

The finish of the final race of the afternoon **The Mrs J N Somers Handicap** surpassed the sprint race as after his deliberations the judge declared could not split the first two declaring a dead heat between the Tim Clark ridden Grey Panel who has been a revelation this season and Rebel Women ridden by Mark Lawson and trained by Angie Corson her third winner of the afternoon with favourite Uniform Ruby a short head back in third, such was the blanket finish the first five home were all within a length of each other at the finish completing the afternoons racing in dramatic style.

Next meeting is on Sunday 24th June