

## JERSEY RACE CLUB

Jersey Derby meeting report  
By Bobsbest

Major Maximus won a thrilling Jersey Derby, watched by the biggest crowd of the season, after a pulsating battle with Landolino. The winner, officially the most improved horse of the season, still had plenty to find on the ratings, but did so with a strong late run on the stand rail to collar Champion Hurdler Landolino inside the final furlong and score by a length. Neuilly ran by far her best race to finish third with last season's victor and Jersey's top rated horse, King Kenny, only fourth.

It was an immensely popular result. Major Maximus is the only horse trained by Christa Gilbert and was ridden by her father David Cuthbert who might reasonably be described as the most senior of local jockeys. The horse looked a picture in the paddock, his almost black coat gleaming with health and vitality and at only 5 years old he undoubtedly has a great future. Landolino got very warm in the preliminaries, but made much of the running and looked sure to win until Major Maximus arrived on the scene. King Kenny was disappointing and connections will look to the handicapper to reflect this run in future ratings. Lang Shining, who also looked particularly well beforehand, totally disgraced himself by refusing to race and this talented enigma looks totally out of love with the sport.

The Morton family sponsored the Derby so it was particularly appropriate that Athania won the first race as he is part owned by Bob Morton and the race, sponsored by Cenkos, was named The Many Happy Returns Susan Hurdle in honour of his wife. Reach Out made most of the running and seemed to be going well two flights out, but Jamie Goldstein brought the winner with a perfectly timed run to lead as they touched down after the last; the two battled to the line with Athania only just prevailing, all out. Robbmaa was a poor third and Les Landes was pulled up before the last.

The Hatstone Lawyers Handicap over five and a half furlongs was won impressively by Spanish Bounty who was giving a stone and more to the field. Three times second this season, he made no mistake under Mattie Batchelor, comfortably getting the better of veteran High Voltage with early pace-setter Fast Freddie third. Kersivay, who had beaten the winner on similar terms in June, was fourth.

The Bloodstock Advisory Services Handicap went to the very consistent Grey Panel. He looked outstanding in the preliminaries and, given a fine ride by Tim Clark who knows him so well, just held the persistent challenge of Pas D'Action; the hard pulling Beck's Bolero ran on well for third with Vamos, sporting pink blinkers for the first time, running his best race for fourth. The winner was 7lb out of the handicap, which the handicapper won't like, but he's won five times this year and now proved beyond doubt that he's not just a soft ground horse. The runner up has also run best with some give, but did nothing wrong and can gain compensation soon.

Racegoers were reminded The Next Meeting Is Ladies Day in a novel way as this was the title of the last race, a mile and three quarters low level handicap. Sumbe was a warm order on the basis of his last promising run, but he clearly failed to get the trip, fading badly as Fine The World swept into the lead over 2 furlongs out. Lady Petrus, on whom Mattie Batchelor had been hard at work a long way out, kept trying under pressure, plugging on to take second, but the other two were beaten a long way out.

So, with the Derby going to a one-horse-power yard and Tony Le Brocq scoring a double it was a big day for the little guys. Indeed, Tony Le Brocq is level with Alyson Malzard at the top of the trainers' table with eight wins apiece while his jockey, Tim Clark, is also on the eight mark, three adrift of leader Jamie Goldstein. Major Maximus must now be clear favourite, with just two meetings left, to be champion racehorse.

As racegoers were reminded, the next fixture is the ever popular Ladies' Day on 12<sup>th</sup> August.