

## **JERSEY RACE CLUB**

Preview, Friday 6 July evening meeting  
By Bobsbest

The midsummer evening meeting usually captures the essence of why Les Landes enjoys the most spectacular setting of any course in the British Isles. As the sun sets the runners are silhouetted against sea and sky until it dips beneath the horizon and the racecourse is bathed in dusky pink light – usually. Sadly there is nothing usual about this summer; indeed there is nothing summery about this summer. However, if there is any justice, Friday evening will be fine, warm and clear and the Jersey Race Club can start making up for lost time and revenue.

The card is an all handicap affair so competitive racing is certain, which is another way of saying it won't be easy finding the winners. The main event is The Quilter Handicap over 9 furlongs, handsomely sponsored by Quilter. King Kenny carries top weight and though his two big wins last season, the Jersey Derby and the Clarendon, were over a mile and a half his best run this season was at a mile when he won the Jersey Guineas in April, so the trip will not inconvenience him. Of course that was weight for age, here he is giving 18lb and more to the field and it may prove beyond him even though he has been dropped a few pounds since the start of the season. Major Maximus stepped up to a mile and a half last time and won easily, but he's won at this trip beating Vamos and La Verte Rue and although both now enjoy a significant pull in the weights 'Max' has continued to improve; whether he is still ahead of the handicapper we shall see. Red Lago has been very disappointing, but Superduper (won it last year) and Beck's Bolero are both showing consistent decent form. It may be that La Verte Rue, assisted by Jemma Marshall, can spring a surprise.

The jump race that opens the programme is The Cenkos Channel Islands Big Bucks Celebration Hurdle, so capturing the names of two of the best horses owned by the chairman of the sponsoring firm, Cenkos Channel Islands. It has to be said none of the runners is within hailing distance of either Cenkos, a brilliant two mile chaser, or Big Bucks, probably the best staying hurdler of this or any other era. The runners are old rivals and best of them is Fine The World, runner up in the Champion Hurdle last time. As long as she doesn't misbehave at the start as she has done in the past she should win. There's very little between the other three, but Nordic

Affair, winner of a poor contest at this fixture last year, may come out best of them.

The Windsor House Handicap is sponsored by the Rumboll Family, long time and loyal supporters of local racing and run over seven furlongs. The bottom four are out of the handicap proper so if the handicapper knows what he's doing they can be eliminated from consideration. Cryptic Choice still has too much weight for a 3 year old so it comes down to Spanish Bounty, First Cat and Fast Freddie. The first named was touched off by Kersivay over the minimum trip last time when Fast Freddie was fourth, beaten nearly 6 lengths; the 9lb pull he now enjoys may not be enough. First Cat went into a dozen note books with an eye catching second on his local debut, but he has not gone forward since then. Given a rest last time and at what could be his optimum trip he must have a sound chance.

The Episode Fund Handicap, sponsored appropriately by the Episode Fund is a low level handicap over a mile and a quarter. These races for the lesser talented horses provide some of the closest and most exciting contests and interest is heightened by the arrival of Robbmaa, a newcomer to Joan Le Brocq's string. This 7 year old Cape Cross gelding is just 1 for 32 and that solitary success was in a hurdle race, so he is best watched. Rebel Woman and Uniform Ruby are both winners this season, which is more than can be said for the rest, but both are not uncomplicated. Sumbe and Les Landes are capable of winning races.

As the sun sets slowly in the west, The Cenkos Channel Islands Investment Management Handicap will complete the card over a mile and threequarters. It's understood Andy Stewart, owner of so many famous and high class horses, and chairman of Cenkos Channel Islands will be attending the meeting and, presumably, judging the best turned out horses the grooms of which will win £50 each courtesy of Cenkos.

Neuilly beat Lang Shining about 5 lengths last time over 2 furlongs shorter and the latter gets a 4lb pull, but I'm not convinced the extra distance will play to Lang Shining's strengths. River Du Nord is 13lb wrong at the weights and can be overlooked, but Landolino, the Champion Hurdle winner last time, makes his first flat appearance of the year and, getting 10lb from Neuilly, he looks a good thing in the getting out stakes.

News that the States has moved into the world of commercial sponsorship with a £75,000 support package for the Jersey Rugby Club will have caused eyebrows to be raised at other local sports clubs and associations. The justification for taxpayers' cash being

put into the JRFC is the drive to increase sport tourism. Perhaps the Economic Development Minister didn't notice the significant number of visitors who came racing in Jersey for the Goodwood fixture; maybe he doesn't know that Horseracing Abroad will bring another visiting party to this Friday's fixture. Presumably someone will draw to his attention the fact that Les Landes is an important and growing attraction in the Island's overall tourist offering.

Selections:

Fine The World  
First Cat  
La Verte Rue  
Uniform Ruby  
Landolino