

Conditions proved far more hospitable for racegoers at Les Landes yesterday afternoon as the Race Club held their second meeting of the season with the normal five race thoroughbred card being preceded by two pony races.

This is the third occasion that the islands young riders have been given the chance to experience race riding and in the first of them for ponies under 138cm sponsored by Amy Builders Ltd Victoria Malzard and Woody to You completed the hat trick of wins although this year Sophie Cawley on Ku Hi Charisma pressed the winner all the way to the line finishing only three lengths back with Hayden Runacres on Morwyn Tanya Maid and Olivia Moss riding Monbeg Gypsy having their own battle for third some way back with the former taking the honours.

The second of these races for the larger ponies sponsored by Heritage Jersey attracted a field of six with the 2012 winner of this event Free Destiny take the hours again under Paris Benest finishing some five lengths in front of young Malzard on Mosstown Jonjo with Anais Cooke on Bay of Waves just a length back in third, the field was completed by Alice Kent on Grandstand Acrobat, Olivia Moss aboard Arctic Platinum and Sasha Butlin riding Everglade.

The feature race on the main card The Jersey Guineas sponsored by Anthony and Sandra Taylor was won by last year's Jersey Derby winner Major Maximus, given a fine ride by veteran local amateur David Cuthbert the six year old held off the challenge of Spanish Bounty by half a length with UK raider I'm Harry an effortless winner at the Easter meeting a further length back in third. Disappointment of the race was the second UK entrant Good Luck Charm, one of three runners on the card for Gary Moore, despite starting as the odds on favourite he was never sighted with a serious chance eventually finishing back in third.

The afternoon's main card had started with The Heartbreak Hotel Handicap Hurdle which was won by the George Baker trained and Sir Alex Ferguson owned If I Had Him who had been an easy winner at the Easter meeting, once again Mattie Batchelor took up the running as the field headed out on their second circuit but this time he was not able to go clear and jumping the last was headed by Josh Baudains on Fine The World, however Batchelor was able to get a renewed effort out of his charge and got back up to win by half a length with Landolino fifteen lengths back in third. The first of the Moore trained runners Amen had looked to be coming with a serious effort as the field turned for home but it was only a short lived effort as the five year old appeared not to relish the uphill finish at the track.

Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Handicap was the grand title of the five furlong sprint, Angie Corson trained the first two home as Fast Freddie burst back to form with a two length success over well backed stable mate Toggle with Kersivay half a length back in third. The Brendon Powell trained Copper Falls who had won the sprint at the final meeting last season returned to Les Landes after refusing to start on her last two racecourse appearances on the mainland and once again showed her mulish side when playing up at the start and losing any winning chance giving the rest of the field a fifteen length start at flag fall.

The final two races of the afternoon saw the small yard of trainer Tony Le Brocq and Jockey Tim Clark complete a double, firstly in The Henry VII Handicap where Sweet Liberta who was bought out of the yard of Andrew Balding at the end of season sales last year sprang a surprise winning by five lengths from Becks Bolero with Neuilly who many had thought was the certainty of the afternoon failing to produce her Easter Monday form a further two and a half lengths back in third.

Le Brocq and Clark then took The Last Race Handicap courtesy of Grey Panel who like the afternoon's guineas winner Major Maximus had shown steadily improving form during the 2012 season. Having been a shade disappointing at the Easter Meeting the five year old was held back in the middle of the field for much of the race before being asked to quicken in the home straight duly obliging to run out the easiest winner of the afternoon passing the post seven lengths clear of long time leader Vamos with the Stephan Arthur trained Red Lago making a pleasing seasonal debut a neck back in third. The third of the Gary Moore trained runners was once a again well fancied favourite but failed to beat any of his rivals home, all three of Moore's runners were owned by Heart of the South racing and had come over to the island with a large party of their owners.

With the Race Club having only one race on the card sponsored they had to dig deep in order to cover prize money for the remaining four races as they like many sporting bodies in the Island struggle to attract funding, however no doubt they will continue their efforts to conjure up support from local business folk in order to cover the costs of what is one of the islands main spectator sports, Race club secretary would welcome contact from any would be sponsor on 863484.

Next meeting is the annual Guernsey meeting at L'Ancrese on May 6th with the next Les Landes meeting being held on Bank Holiday Monday 27th May with a 2:30pm start