

JERSEY RACE CLUB

Preview Easter Bank Holiday fixture
by Bobsbest

Every new season is different in one way or another and the curtain goes up on the new term at Les Landes with a new Race Club President in post, at least seven new-to-Jersey horses in training and an Easter Monday card that includes three raiders from George Baker's successful Manton stable one of which is owned by none other than Sir Alex Ferguson. Whether the great man will turn up to see his horse run must be in doubt due to his Premiership commitments, but Manchester United is due to meet Sunderland on Saturday and there's no first team fixture on Monday so Sir Alex, who is known to list racing as his principal means of relaxation, may just manage a flying visit.

The principal race on the opening card, The Jersey Bookmakers Handicap over 7 furlongs, is sponsored by all the bookmakers who will be standing at Les Landes on Monday. Top weight, an honour fully earned with some sparkling performances last year, is Spanish Bounty, not out of the first two in his last five runs in 2012. He must give 32lb to one of George Baker's raiders, Sutton Sid, whose run will bring owner Paul Bowden to Jersey for the first time. Sutton Sid is a 3 year-old gelding by Dutch Art out of a Pivotal mare; Pivotal's stock tends to relish easy underfoot conditions that may prevail on Monday. Having run a good second on his first run it took him another five outings to break his duck in a seller at Wolverhampton and he's unlikely to travel all the way from Wiltshire for the sea air. The race also sees the debuts of Lordship and Lucifer's Shadow. The former, in the care of Joan Le Brocq, is a King's Best 9 year-old gelding with 69 races and 5 wins under his belt having until recently been trained by Tony Carroll; he hasn't

won since October 2009 so is probably best watched. Lucifer's Shadow has joined Christa Gilbert's small stable from Sylvester Kirk. He's a Dark Angel 4 year-old and like many of his sire's offspring he's a grey whose sole win was registered in a Wolverhampton 7 furlong handicap last May. With last year's winner and runner up, Fast Freddie and First Cat in the line up along with Pas D'Action, who likes to get his toe in, the promising Country Blue and stalwart Toggle, this looks as competitive a heat as we saw all last year.

The card and the new season opens with a sponsored two mile handicap hurdle. It is sponsored in honour of a special lady who knows nothing of the tribute, but there may be a connection with one of the runners. Landolino was a revelation last year winning on the flat and sauntering home in the Champion Hurdle, so it is no surprise that he has to give weight all round, including to Sir Alex Ferguson's If I Had Him. He's won at Yarmouth, Wolverhampton and Taunton and arrives in good form having been a fair second in a Wolverhampton handicap over an extended two miles just a fortnight ago. The Taunton win was in a selling hurdle and he did it well; in receipt of 8lb from Landolino he must have a decent chance. Fine The World, now with Angie Corson, his third local trainer, would have won this race last year but for a last flight fall and Reach Out completes the field from nearly a stone out of the handicap.

The Guy Edwards Memorial Handicap over a mile and a half is sponsored by Race Club President Peter Edwards who will be keeping his fingers firmly crossed that the weather is kind on Monday as a big attendance is crucial to the Club's finances. Neuilly helped make Bob and Helene Bonney leading owners last season and she'll seek to continue in the winning vein in which she finished

2012. She gives just 1lb to Lang Shining, now in the veteran stage, but still capable of travelling well through his races only to finish weakly; sooner or later the handicapper will give him a chance and he is the sort to go well fresh. Azaria is better known as a hurdler and Lady Petrus is consistent, but hard to win with while it's good to see National Monument back after a long lay off.

Race four has the enticing title, The Adorne Double 'D' Cup, clearly a reference to the winner's trophy. This is a mile and a quarter handicap, which features another brace of debutants, Sweet Liberta and Deepika. The former is with Tony Le Brocq's successful St John yard having left Andrew Balding for whom the 4 year-old Cape Cross filly won two of her fifteen starts, both on Lingfield's all weather surface. Deepika is a 5 year-old formerly French trained mare that ran just twice in that country in 2010, but showed little worthwhile form. However she is just the sort that Alyson Malzard has excelled with in the past and this daughter of Key Of Luck should be kept an eye on. Top weight is 2011 champion King Kenny whose less sparkling 2012 form has seen the handicapper relenting somewhat, but he still has plenty to do to give Major Maximus 7lb. Sissi Guihen and Becks Bolero are consistent and win when it's their turn.

It is good to see the Channel Islands racing regulatory authority continue to sponsor a race and theirs is the last race on the card, a handicap over the extended mile. At the head of affairs is I'm Harry, the third of George Baker's raiders. He's still to win after sixteen starts, but he has some reasonable placed form to his credit at Ayr and Lingfield and the opposition in this low level affair for horses rated up to 50 may be a tad weaker than this Haaftd gelding is used to meeting. Athania won on this card last season and Grey Panel started his winning run in this race. Newcomer Rocquaine is owned

by Guernsey bookmaker Trevor Galienne who is a strong supporter of local racing; previously with David Evans this 4 year-old filly is nought for eight, but has run well from 8 to 10 furlongs at Bath and Brighton and is in the hands of a trainer well capable of getting one ready first time.

Selections

Landolino

Lang Shining

Sutton Sid

Major Maximus

Grey Panel

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