

Post Race Write Up 16.08.15

It might have been Ladies day at Les Landes, but the day was dominated by one man, Karl Kukk who had a magnificent and well deserved four timer. With the weather having brightened up the rain softened ground had dried out and provided perfect racing ground.

The feature race was The Coutts Handicap run over 1 mile 100 yards for which the Richard Hannon trained runner Larch was sent off favourite. Last time out winner Fast Freddie was sent off in front under Michelle Hooper, with First Cat under Phillip Prince close up on the outside and Captain James observing from the rear. The field remained very tightly grouped, with Rainbow Charlie the first to send out distress signals just passing the 4 furlong marker. Turning in and there were 3 abreast, the strong travelling first Cat on the outer, Mattie Batchelor on Larch up the inside with fast Freddie the meat in the sandwich. Approaching the final furlong and the Bunny Roberts owned First Cat taken up the stand side rail asserted under hands and heels and despite idling went on to win 1 length from Larch in second.

The first race on the card was Jersey's longest race, The Ladbrokes Grid Handicap Hurdle over 2 1/2 miles for which 4 went to post. Fourni second last time out was sent off the narrow odds on favourite under Michelle Hooper, with the Lavender racing owned Dalmo next in the betting. Dalmo jumped off in front at a rather sedate pace and by the time the field had passed the winning post for the first time Fourni had pulled her way in to the lead, with Dalmo under Mark Quinlan and Granit Man under Richard Hodson travelling well in behind. This order stayed pretty much the same for the next 1 1/2 circuits where approaching the final 4 furlongs Pomander was the first to cry enough. Turning into the straight it looked like Fourni was going to hold on to her lead, but approaching the final flight the distress signals were being sent out as the mare started to tire and this allowed Dalmo to sweep through to win a shade cosily going away by 4 lengths, with Fourni holding on for second by head from Granit Man.

The Ladbrokes Grid Price Surge Handicap over 7 furlongs was the second race on the card. A delay to the start meant that the horses were milling around at the start for several minutes, and by the time they were called in to line several were wound up and less than cooperative. After two false starts the field were eventually let go with several caught flat footed, none worse than Purley Queen who lost all chance after hesitating to jump off. Phillip Prince on the Kukk trained Movementneverlies seized the initiative and kicked his mount into 7 length lead which the other jockeys seemed happy to allow him, with Speedy Writer and Chester'Slittlegem just ahead of the favourite Pas D'Action. If anything the leader increased the lead and 3 furlongs out the Jockeys behind sensed the urgency and started trying to close the gap led by Speedy Writer, and turning in they had reduced the deficit to around 5 lengths. However the leader looked like he had just been given a breather around the home turn and kicked again once in the straight and was kept up to her work to win by 5 lengths from Speedy Writer under Mark Quinlan and Pas D'Action back in third. This brought up doubles for Kukk, Prince and owner Bunny Roberts.

The fourth race was The Ladbrokes Ladies Day Handicap over 1 1/4 miles, and with Lucifers Shadow a non runner this left a field of 4 with the Kukk trained and Mark Quinlan ridden Steely narrowly shading The Malzard trained Carrera for favouritism. From flag fall Steely was sent off into the lead and passing the post had been allowed a 10 length lead by the other jockeys, eventually Mattie Batchelor set off in pursuit, and had closed the gap to just 4 lengths approaching the 4 furlong marker. Turning in and Carrera was now being ridden along in second as Quinlan kicked for home on the leader, while Richard Hodson on Hawaiian Freeze started to make ground along with Beck's Bolero from the rear. Approaching the furlong marker it looked like Batchelor's persistence on Carrera was about to be rewarded as he got to Steelys flanks, however this effort was short lived as

Steely stayed on strongly to win going away again by 4 lengths. This brought up Kukuk's four timer, and a double for Mark Quinlan after his victory in the hurdle race.

The final race of the day was The Ladbrokes Best Odds Guaranteed Handicap over 1 1/2 miles. With Major Maximus already a non runner the field was reduced further when Herbalist was withdrawn without having made it on to the course, and thus denying Kukuk the opportunity of a fifth winner on the day. This left a field of 7, but with a rematch between the Derby 1st and 2nd, and the easy last time out winner King Kenny it was still a very competitive affair. Rossetti was receiving a full stone in weight from Aussie Lyrics having being beaten 7 lengths in the Derby off level weights, despite this the latter was still sent off favourite. The Sheikh A'Leg Racing owned Rossetti was kicked in to an immediate lead under Mattie Batchelor, and turning into the home straight on the first circuit led by some 6 lengths, with River du Nord under Jemma Marshall back in second followed closely by the other two main protagonists the grey Aussie Lyrics under Freddie Tett and King Kenny under Mark Lawson. The strong travelling and compact Rossetti then fairly scooted around the top bends, and by the time the leader passed the 6 furlong marker the lead had increased to a staggering 15 lengths, with the other jockeys confusingly happy to allow the leader this start. Tett was the first rider to set off to reduce the gap and was followed through by King Kenny with River du Nord beating a retreat. Turning into the home straight and Rossetti was being shovelled along by Batchelor, while Aussie Lyrics had managed to reduce the gap to around 5 lengths, while King Kenny appeared to be caught flat footed back in 3rd. Tett was still to go for Aussie Lyrics who's best work is generally done on the bridle, however it soon became evident that there wasn't much left in the tank as Tett began to become more animated. Approaching the furlong marker and Rossetti still maintained a 4 length advantage with Aussie Lyrics sticking admirably to the task but he appeared to have been given too much to do, and Rossetti maintained the gallop to win by 3 lengths from King Kenny who finished like a train up the stands side rail to snatch second on the line.

This means all is to play for at the last meeting on 31st August, with Christa Gilbert and Aly Malzard tied on 9 winners for the trainers title, and the champion horse trophy still very much up for grabs.

Dave Evans
www.west.je