

FREEZE SENDS TRAINER OVER THE MOON
JERSEY RACING - CLARENDON MEETING - REPORT
by **Mark Johnson**

No matter how many horses, and big race winners, James Moon goes on to saddle during his career HAWAIIAN FREEZE will always have a very special place in the young Jersey-based trainer's heart.

It was only on the 13th June last year that the diminutive mare Hawaiian Freeze provided Jersey's newest trainer with his first career winner and on Bank Holiday Monday at Les Landes - just over 14 months after that initial victory - she gave him his biggest (and in total sixth) winner as a trainer when taking the Channel Islands' most important Flat Handicap - "The Clarendon".

Not bad for a horse who Moon bought in April 2014 for just £700 at Tattersalls Sales in the UK.

Now a 7-year-old, Hawaiian Freeze was winning for the third time in 2016 (including once over Hurdles) when taking the traditional feature of the August Bank Holiday card - the mile-and-a-half Ross-Gower Associates 2016 Clarendon Handicap - run in front of big crowd, on firm ground, in gloriously sunny weather conditions.

Much of the attention in the lead up to the race had focused on odds-on favourite Aussie Lyrics and his bid to emulate Compassionate in 2000/2001 in winning a Jersey Derby/Clarendon "Double-Double". The Christa Gilbert-trained grey having won the last two renewals of the Derby and last year's Clarendon by 8 lengths. However, this year he had to concede 15lbs or more to all of his rivals - he was conceding 28lbs to Hawaiian Freeze.

Turning for home, with just over a quarter-of-a-mile to run, it appeared that Aussie Lyrics may indeed make his own piece of history - he was travelling so well in behind the leaders, but when jockey Marc Goldstein asked him for an effort there was absolutely nothing left in the tank. Perhaps it was the weight, or perhaps it was effects of a hard prep-race on his last start, but the favourite didn't fire this time eventually fading to finish fourth.

That left Hawaiian Freeze, under Philip Prince, and Benoordenhout (ridden by St Ouen-born but now UK-based apprentice Tim Clark for trainer Tony Le Brocq) to fight out the finish and, despite hanging left under pressure inside the final furlong, Hawaiian Freeze won comprehensively by 1½ lengths from Benoordenhout.

Celebration by connections, and indeed backers of the 9/4 second favourite in the field of six, had to be put on hold for some 25 minutes after the race as the stewards held a ludicrously long inquiry into possible interference between the first two home in the final furlong. There was

never a chance of winner losing the race - quite simply any interference between the two principals made absolutely no difference to the result - but the delay to the result being made official certainly added to the tension!

Aly Malzard went away on holiday to Tenerife on Tuesday happy knowing she will be Champion Channel Islands Trainer for the thirteenth time no matter what happens at the final meeting of the season on Sunday 11 September. A double on the Bank Holiday card moved her on to the 12 winner-mark for the season and she can now no longer be caught.

“We would never usually go away before the final meeting”, Malzard confessed, “But with the 11 September meeting being a late addition to the fixture list (*it makes up for the abandoned Easter Monday fixture at the start of the season*) we had no choice. We are only away for a week and my staff will keep things going so we will probably still have seven runners on the final day card”.

The Malzard double was initiated by the Channel Islands’ top sprinter of the year COUNTRY BLUE in the Liberation Brewery & Roquette Cider Handicap over 5½ furlongs. Under Mattie Batchelor he made all the running to beat First Cat by half-a-length.

This was Country Blue’s tenth career win and his ninth at Les Landes - his first win came in his native France. More significantly it was his fourth win of the year over this exact course & distance putting him in pole position, with a meeting to go, of landing the Green Island Restaurant & The Prince of Wales sponsored Channel Islands Leading Horse Award for 2016.

The Malzard stable double was completed by OCEAN CRYSTAL in the Wilson Estate Agents & Keys Properties “Glory Bee” Handicap over a mile-and-a-quarter in which he came from last-to-first in the hands of Freddie Tett to beat last year’s winner Lady Petrus 2 lengths.

Probably the biggest cheer of the day was reserved for the winner of the last race as he entered the winners’ enclosure. The 12-year-old FAST FREDDIE was having his 109th race when he went to post for the Huncote Stud Breeding Success Handicap Mile but there is life in the old boy yet and he made it career win number 18 (11 of which have come at Les Landes) when beating another popular course specialist Pas D’Action under Nora Looby.

This was Fast Freddie’s second win of 2016 having also scored at the annual Guernsey race meeting in May. Trainer Angie Corson hinted after that Guernsey victory that this may be Fast Freddie’s last season racing but given the enthusiasm which he shows in his races it would be no surprise to see him back next year as a teenager.

At the previous Les Landes meeting all five races had gone to UK-trained runners but on Bank Holiday Monday there was only one representative from the UK - JAZZY LADY. She followed up her victory at the previous fixture with a 16 length success from Bowl Imperior in the opening Arzal Memorial Handicap Hurdle ridden by Lucy Gardner and trained by her mother Sue.

Jazzy Lady is now set to return to Jersey in a bid for a hat-trick when she contests the richest ever race to be run in the Channel Islands - the £5,000 Firpine Development Ltd Handicap Hurdle - centre piece of the "Late Summer Meeting" on Sunday 11 September.

At that meeting there will be a £857 carryover for the popular Pick Four Jackpot bet which was not won on Bank Holiday Monday.