

JAZZY'S JERSEY JACKPOT
JERSEY RACING - LATE SUMMER MEETING - REPORT
by Mark Johnson

JAZZY LADY maintained her unbeaten record at Les Landes Racecourse when winning the most valuable race ever run in the Channel Islands, The Fir-Pine Development Handicap Hurdle Series Final, on Sunday - the final day of the 2016 Channel Islands racing season.

Trained by Devon-based Sue Gardner, and ridden by her amateur rider daughter Lucy, 5 year-old Jazzy Lady pegged back the long time leader Fourni (under an enterprising positive ride from champion jockey Mattie Batchelor) approaching the last of the ten flights of hurdles in the 2¼ mile, £5,000 to the winner, feature.

At the line Jazzy Lady, who was sent off the 8/11 Favourite in the field of five, beat Fourni by three lengths with last month's Clarendon Handicap winner Hawaiian Freeze a further 20 lengths back in third.

To qualify for the Series Final horses had to run at least twice over hurdles in the Channel Islands during the 2016 season and Jazzy Lady qualified by winning handicap hurdles at the previous two meetings in August - the longest race of the season, over 2½ miles on 14th August and a 2 mile race on 29th August. She is now a perfect 3 for 3 at Les Landes.

“For a moment I thought I might not catch Mattie (*Batchelor on the runner-up*) but I knew my mare is really game and she'd stay on up the hill”, said rider Lucy Gardner after the race adding, “It's a real thrill to come here and win a race like this, we'll certainly be back next year”.

Jazzy Lady was also completing a perfect 2016 campaign at Les Landes for trainer Sue Gardner as all four runners she saddled on Jersey during the season won - the other winner being River Du Nord, in a 1½ mile handicap on the flat, on Ladies Day. All four stable winners are owned by longtime local racing supporter Jane Edgar.

Seldom does a sportsman, or racehorse, do a lap of honour after finishing second but Country Blue got to do just that on Sunday. Although he could only finish 7 lengths runner-up to MENDACIOUS HARPY in the opening 7 furlong Millbrook Summer Handicap Sprint he was back out in the winner's enclosure doing his lap of honour after the last race as The Green Island & The Prince of Wales Channel Islands Champion Racehorse of 2016.

The points-based Championship (9 points for a win, 3 for second & one for third) runs all season and Country Blue amassed 46 points during the year putting him 8 clear of his stablemate from the Aly Malzard yard Pas D'Action - the latter unfortunately missing a head-to-head clash with

Country Blue on Sunday due to a touch of lameness.

Country Blue, who runs in the colours of Jersey Race Club President Tony Taylor, was running over a distance slightly too far for him on Sunday (7 furlongs or 1,400 metres) as his four wins during 2016 - and all nine of his wins at Les Landes in total - have come over the shortest distance run at the track 5½ furlongs (1,100 metres).

After racing his trainer Aly Malzard, who herself was crowned Champion Trainer for the thirteenth time, described Country Blue as, “A total star who just simply loves to race and always tries his heart out”.

However on this day, on the track, Country Blue had to play second fiddle to MENDACIOUS HARPY ridden by Marc Goldstein for UK-based trainer George Baker.

A regular visitor to Les Landes, Baker went on to complete a double on the day when FLUTTERBEE took the concluding William Hill Handicap, over 1¾ miles, by 7 lengths from Bowl Imperior. Flutterbee was an eleventh winner of the season for jockey Mattie Batchelor - securing the ever popular rider with his fourth consecutive Channel Islands Jockeys Championship.

A fantastic campaign for local second-season trainer James Moon was capped off with the victory of BLACK NIGHT in the Humber Racing & Bloodstock Handicap over an extended mile. Officially the highest rated horse on the flat in training in the Channel Islands, 4 year-old Black Night gave 10 lbs or more away to all his rivals and still won impressively by four lengths. Injury prevented him from running in the Jersey Derby in July but he will be a potent force come 2017.

The win of Black Night, and the subsequent third-placed finish of stablemate Hawaiian Freeze in the big hurdle race, meant that James' mother Anne Moon won the award as Champion Owner of the Year.

Another local trainer to enjoy a terrific season was Tony Le Brocq and he sent out his eighth winner from only 24 runners when GREY PANEL took the mile-and-a-half Ravenscroft Handicap. This was the closest finish of the day with Grey Panel battling on gamely to beat Captain James and Spring Dixie by a length and two lengths.

Grey Panel himself was capping a great season - this being his third victory of 2016. The 8 year-old has now won thirteen times in total during his career and all those wins have come at Les Landes. He was ridden to victory on this occasion by visiting UK-based professional Andrew Elliott who was recording his first win in the Channel Islands.

As well as Champion Racehorse of the Year Country Blue, two other

horses were paraded after racing as race fans had their chance to salute a duo of popular horses heading into retirement - King Kenny and Fast Freddie.

11 year-old King Kenny won 14 of his 84 races - 13 of his wins came at Les Landes including the 2011 Jersey Derby and Clarendon Handicap.

12 year-old Fast Freddie won 18 of his 110 races - 11 of his wins came at Les Landes and another 2 on Guernsey. He won twice this year.

As is traditional at the end of the awards ceremony the Jersey Race Club President delivered a short key-note speech. Tony Taylor, at the end of his second season as JRC President, reported 2016 “Had been a good season with total runners up 11% since 2014 and Jersey-trained runners up 12½% over the same period”.

He also reported race sponsorship had increased by 70% in the last two years with “only two non-sponsored races this season compared to 14 non-sponsored races in 2014”.

Channel Islands racing has always needed and enjoyed strong support from UK-based trainers but Mr Taylor sounded a word of warning with regard to the continuation of UK-trained horses boosting field sizes and therefore creating far more competitive racing, “The cost and availability of sea transport for horses is becoming a major issue”, he said before adding, “Condor please take note”.

THE 2016 CHANNEL ISLANDS RACING SEASON

ROLL OF HONOUR

WINNERS & runners-up

CHAMPION HORSE

1st COUNTRY BLUE owner Tony Taylor, trainer Aly Malzard - 46 points

2nd Pas D’Action owner Jim Jamouneau, trainer Aly Malzard - 38 points

CHAMPION JOCKEY

1st MATTIE BATCHELOR - 11 winners

2nd Tim Clark - 8 winners

CHAMPION LADY RIDER

1st JEMMA MARSHALL - 5 winners

2nd Alice Mills - 3 winners

CHAMPION TRAINER

1st ALY MALZARD - 12 winners

2nd Tony Le Brocq - 8 winners

CHAMPION OWNER

1st ANNE MOON - £13,670 in win & place prize money

2nd Steven Smith - £13,260 in win & place prize money

CHAMPION HURDLE

1st ROSSETTI - rider Noel Fehily, trainer Neil Mulholland (UK)

2nd Cahill - rider Mark Quinlan, trainer Christa Gilbert

JERSEY DERBY

1st AUSSIE LYRICS - rider Mattie Batchelor, trainer Christa Gilbert

2nd Bowl Imperior - rider Jemma Marshall, trainer Aly Malzard

CLARENDON WINNER

1st HAWAIIAN FREEZE - rider Philip Prince, trainer James Moon

2nd Benoordenhout - rider Tim Clark, trainer Tony Le Brocq