

Dubai Day 20th July Review

By Paul Simmons

A superb crowd of nearly 18,000 gathered to watch some of the finest Arabian racing in Europe and for the first time all the races were screened live in betting shops throughout the UK where the general public could all bet off course on Arabian racing. This sort of coverage is priceless for the growth and development of this rapidly developing sport.

Race 1 – The Emirates Airline Handicap Stakes 0-75 over 7 Furlongs

This was a colossal training achievement by Sam Davison here with Tania Bucknell's game filly Pepita De Carrere winning this race on her seasonal debut. Davison was recording her third successive win in this race and this year managed to saddle the first three home with 2006 scorer Almost All giving his stablemate a run for her money and WFA Leopard chasing them both home. They were smartly away from the stalls with the greys CS Khan and the heavily backed Mazouj both showing early speed, with WFA Leopard and Almost All travelling extremely well in behind and A'Rasheeq handy too. As they approached the 3 furlong marker A'Rasheeq went for home with Nenette, WFA Leopard and Almost All moving dangerously in behind. As they hit the final furlong it was between the Davison pair WFA Leopard and Almost All who were head to head, but Ashley Byles riding a superb race on Pepita De Carrere was flying down the track; this smart progressive filly took the lead inside the final half furlong and Almost All being the brave soldier he is fought back and they were head to head all the way to the line with 50/1 shot Pepita De Carrere (Guytou De Carrere x Assada El Baraka) just getting home from her better fancied stablemate by a head. Linda Cross's pride and joy Almost All (Bengali D'Albret x Emotsia) is as gallant and brave as they come and lost nothing in defeat giving 16 lbs to the winner, whilst WFA Leopard (Bengali D'Albret x Lapsana) had his own battle with the Royal Cavalry of Oman's progressive entire A'Rasheeq (Djendel x Salam) taking third a length back with A'Rasheeq a creditable fourth. Winning trainer Sam Davison said afterwards *"I am amazed, it still hasn't sunk in, they have all run so well and Pepita has run the race of her life and Almost All is a star"*. Winning owner Tania Bucknell said *"It's all thanks to Sam and her team they done a great job with her and Ashley for riding a great race"*.

Race 2 – The Al Hai Group 1 Zabeel Stakes over 6 Furlongs

The gallant stallion Ircalan DA from Belgium set off like a scalded cat from the gates ensuring this race was a true sprint championship. He led with true courage and grit till inside the final two furlongs but Nimr, Quaolina, Mutafani and Nowann were all queuing up in behind. Nimr asserted his authority inside the two furlong marker but Quaolina and Mutafani were both going well in behind. Inside the final furlong Quaolina (Kerbella x Cary De Carrere) was set alight under a masterful ride from Richard Hills and she quickened clear in excellent style to show a blinding turn of foot to win by two lengths for owner HH Sheikh Hamdan and French trainer Damien De Watrigant. The Royal Cavalry of Oman owned and Julian Smart trained Mutafani (Amer x Cheikha) ran the race of his life in second, chasing the winner every step of the way but he couldn't match her pace. He was kept up to his work strongly to hold off a fast finishing Nowann (Dormane x Noemie Du Cayrou). The latter pipped a disappointing Nimr for third.

Race 3 – The NBD Hatta International Stakes Group 1 (mares only) over 1 Mile 2 Furlongs

A disappointingly falsely run race with all six runners refusing to make the running leaving a very reluctant Miesque De L'Ardus setting a pathetic pedestrian pace, this race was run at a crawl which wouldn't have suited any of the field and even once they hit the home straight the leader didn't quicken instead leaving it till the three furlong marker. That said nothing should be taken from the impressive winner Magadir, a former Qatar Derby winner who didn't handle the track on her UK debut and then was withdrawn from the UK Derby after getting upset in the preliminaries. Magadir (Amer x Mafatma) was ridden with supreme confidence by Alan Munro who held her up in second as the race began in the final two furlongs and then quickened clear inside the final furlong to win impressively by over a length at the line for owner HH Sheikh Mohammed Al Thani. Full credit should go to former top UK based trainer Georgina Ward (now based in Qatar) who trained this filly to perfection to get her back on form to contest and win this event, speaking afterwards Ward said *"I have never lost faith in her, she is still only a baby and there is a lot more to come from her"*. The Bill Smith trained and Jane Haddock owned mare Nokomys (Amer x KTP Mystic Flight) ran a superb race in second, she seemed to get going a bit late but was finishing like a train inside the final furlong and was gaining on the winner with every stride. Last years UK Derby winner Miesque De L'Ardus (Kesberoy x Jelfa De L'Ardus) couldn't quicken as well as the first two inside the final two furlongs but as she got into her stride started to reel in the first two and was only a neck behind

Nokomys at the line; she was well clear of last years Hatta heroine and odds on favourite Ouassila Thabet who didn't handle the muddling pace of this middle distance race.

Race 4 – Shadwell Dubai Group 1 International Stakes over 1 Mile 2 Furlongs

A disappointing field this year with the European competition opting to stay at home, but that said it was a fascinating re-run with No Risk Al Maury lining up against Jaafer ASF and UK protégé Prince Dormant. The race started rather dramatically with No Risk Al Maury seeming to rear coming out of the stalls and then stumble on landing, full credit to jockey Richard Hills for keeping his cool, he allowed this superb stallion to regain his stride and didn't panic at the seven length lead the field had on him. Rebecca Colldin rode an enterprising ride on Swedish raider Hespeshal and set off at a blistering pace, with Jaafer ASF, Alize Safinat and Prince Dormant travelling well in behind. As they hit the three furlong marker Alan Munro made his move on Jaafer ASF to try and draw the sting out of No Risk Al Maury's finish, but Richard Hills was looking extremely confident on last years winner and as hit the final furlong Hills released his run and No Risk Al Maury (Kesberoy x Nectarine Al Maury) responded in style quickening clear with supreme authority to win by just over a length at the line for UK champion trainer Gill Duffield and owner HH Sheikh Hamdan. Duffield has always held this horse in high regard and commented *"He is wonderful horse to train and a complete professional"*. Jaafer ASF (Amer x Madjela) ran yet another game race for trainer Georgina Ward after yet another second (was runner up to Badad in the Qatar Cup in Germany two weeks previous), he is still a young horse and gave No Risk Al Maury a real battle this time round, he could well reverse the form next year. Hespeshal (Izentespeshal x Tatarka) was a superb third after a great ride from Rebecca Colldin for his Swedish connections finishing ahead of the useful Prince Dormant.

Race 5 – The Jumeirah Group International Stakes Group 2 (3 yrs old only) over 7 Furlongs

They went a fair pace in the early stages with CS Jakari and Alibaba Del Sol taking each other on for the lead, with 4/5 favourite Royal Class cruising in behind. As they approached the three furlong marker an ever confident Richard Hills kicked on with Royal Class quickening clear nicely with CS Jakari and Alibaba Del Sol rallying hard in behind. As they approached the final furlong Royal Class (Kesberoy x Hammdie Class) had set sail for home and was well clear winning by an easy six lengths at the line for owner HH Sheikh Hamdan and trainer Gill Duffield. Back in second was phenomenal performance from the Middleton Stud owned and Dennis Batteate trained Tidarbret (Bengali D'Albret x Iktidar) who was outpaced in the preliminaries but stayed on really strongly in the closing stages under a fine ride from Neil Pollard. Karen Van Den Bos' Dutch raider Alibaba Del Sol (Kerbella x A L'Aube del Sol) plugged on for third ahead of a one paced CS Jakari.

Race 6 – The Jebel Ali Racing Club Stakes Handicap 0-105 over 1 Mile 5 Furlongs

The great old war horse CS Al Wahed made sure this was a true stamina sapping trip leading the field at a great pace from the start and leading until the four furlong marker when the young guns took over. Estihlal led from the three furlong marker with Paul De Faust, Deolali, Aljaareh and Quorman Des Violettes all cantering in behind. As they hit the two furlong marker Paul De Faust went for home but stablemate and last years victor Aljaareh (Khairouan x Bisbille) was full of running in behind and Richard Hills - recording his fourth win of the day for HH Sheikh Hamdan- kicked this smart stallion on from the final furlong to win by half a length at the line for trainer Gill Duffield (landing her third win of the day). The Royal Cavalry of Oman's Quorman Des Violettes (Dormane x Khandela Des Violette) was desperately unlucky, he came with a strong late run inside the final furlong and was gaining with every stride at the line under Tadgh O'Shea but just failed by half a length. Paul De Faust (Al Sakbe x Gabie De Carrere) ran with credit and stayed on strongly after he was headed, he kept on inside the final furlong to hold onto third from a once paced Deolali (the latter being placed in this race for the third successive year).

7th Race – The Emirates Horse Breeders Society Handicap Stakes 0-90 over 1 Mile

Another competitive handicap with several useful improving performers in the line. In the end it was an incredible riding performance from David Turner who seized this race by the scruff of its neck and took control from the start on Georgina Ward's rapidly improving colt Falak (Amer x Feline Du Cassou). Turner was out of the stalls quickly on Falak (who won well on his UK debut at Fontwell over 12 furlongs), he was soon in command and several lengths clear of the field from the three furlong marker with the others all being hard ridden in behind, as they hit the two furlong marker Falak was showing no signs of stopping and Turner rode the 6/4 favourite out hands and heels for an easy and confident win for owner/breeder HH Sheikh Mohammed Al Thani and trainer Georgina Ward. Speaking afterwards Ward said *"We missed the Derby to keep him fresh for this race, we knew he would stay and David rode a great race making all. This here is a very nice colt!"*. Ejaabi (Prince D'Orient x Segalaoui) ran extremely well in behind, he was always chasing the winner but took second inside the final two furlongs and ran on strongly inside the final furlong to hold off stablemate Marsak (Al Sakbe x Margau) . The latter travelled and quickened up nicely but couldn't sustain the pace of the first two and finished another two lengths back in third ahead of smart handicapper Jelvita.

The Unofficial Simmons Awards

Training performance of the day – Sam Davison for training the first three home in opening handicap with the first two making their seasonal debuts.

Ride of the Day - David Turner's bold and powerful ride to win on Falak in the final handicap.

Most Impressive Victory – No Risk Al Maury's superb recovery and confident victory in the Dubai Stakes.

Best Run in Defeat – Julian Smart's Quorman Des Vialettes who so nearly got home in the Jebel Ali Racecourse Handicap Stakes.

Eyecatching Performance – Dennis Batteate's Tidarbret's impressive burst of speed to snatch second in the Juvenile race.