

Huntingdon 31st May Racing Review

By Paul Simmons

The Royal Cavalry of Oman Maiden Stakes over 1 Mile 2 Furlongs

A decent field went to post and Secondwan cut out the running, but odds on favourite Ejaabi was cruising in behind and was going ominously well in the final two furlongs; he kicked on in the final furlong going head to head all the way to the line with Barik who was being hard driven by Rhys Flint. However, in the shadow of the post Phil Collington just got **Ejaabi** (Prince D'Oreint x Segalaoui) home by a head for Champion trainer Gill Duffield and HH Shiekh Hamdan. This colt holds a Derby entry and is one for the short list. Barik lost nothing in defeat and he clearly benefited from a superb ride from Flint, but Ejaabi is a classy colt and showed plenty of guts and resolution to win this. Al Bashiq ran a race full of promise on his debut and kept up to his work grimly in the final furlong to hold off Secondwan.

The ARO Sweepstakes Handicap 0-80 over 1 Mile 6 Furlongs

Fedor Du Bourmais made all the running in this race and led the field at a moderate pace throughout which did not suit odds on favourite Estival, who raced keenly down the back straight. As Fedor upped the pace with four furlongs to run Steve Harrison was cruising in behind on Estival with Oman raider Quorman Des Vialettes in her slip stream. With two furlongs to run the writing was on the wall and Harrison let **Estival** (Khairouan x Viny De Passerat (Dormane)) have her head and this game mare powered clear with Fedor and Quorman Des Vialettes chasing hard in behind; she won with a couple of lengths to spare and remains firmly on the upgrade for owner Colin Banks. Speaking afterwards winning trainer Angela Colledge said "She's a superb mare and is still improving". Quorman Des Vialettes ran on well to snatch second from Fedor but looked to be struggling to last home over this trip and might be worth another chance when dropped back. He holds a Derby entry and might appreciate 10f more. Fedor is a decent yardstick and stayed on dourly up the straight.

The Lycetts Open (TB & AA) Handicap Stakes over 1 Mile 2 Furlongs

John Wilson's **Night Cap** (Night Shift x Classic Design) was sent off odds on favourite and former Champion jockey Phil Collington will do well to land a more comfortable victory this season. This handsome son of Night Shift was always going extremely well and pulled clear in the home straight to win as he liked with the rest of the field struggling in his wake and is value for more than the winning distance. Infidel stayed on well in the closing stages and was comfortably clear of the field to take second in the final furlong, whilst Kooks was passing tired horses in the straight and seemed to be getting a second wind in the last furlong, staying on ahead of Madrison.

The Esteem Bloodstock Maiden Stakes over 6 Furlongs

Another brilliant ride performance for Steve Harrison who made all on Tony Coleman's game mare **Edjalie** (Bengali D'Albret x Edjara Al Garamaze), leading the field a merry dance and flying home in the final furlong to hold off the relentless and persistent efforts of the Royal Cavalry of Oman's A'Rasheeq. Edjalie won by half a length at the line to give Glen Kiff his second win of the campaign. A'Rasheeq impressed on his debut held up with a run, he came with every chance in the final furlong but just couldn't get up on the line. Whilst Remaal ran a much better race here than on her debut, she clearly has plenty of speed and was running on well in the final furlong but unlike some of her stablemates this filly doesn't look to be top class.

The Jebel Ali Racing Club Handicap Stakes 0-70 over 1 Mile 2 Furlongs

Operatic (Vert Olive x Operetta (Silver Scenario)) has been a grand servant to the Colledge yard but hadn't won since '05, however, he ran here like a horse possessed under an inspired ride from Rhys Flint, who is clearly a name to remember. Flint jumped Operatic off in front and made all, when challenged in the home straight he drove on and Operatic responded in kind with a powerful staying performance to come home four lengths too good for Muhal. Delighted owner/trainer Angela Colledge – scoring a double on the day – praised Flint afterwards, saying "He rode a brilliant race and rode the horse just right. Operatic deserves this win as he always tries so hard in his races". Muhal ran his best race to date in the UK for the Royal Cavalry of Oman although he had some form in UAE over the winter; he clearly appreciated this step down in class and showed plenty of guts to pull alongside Operatic in the final furlong, but he was never going to pass the winner. Musaayer is clearly going the right way and put in another good effort here, staying on well in the final furlong to claim third.

The Shaw & Fox Open (TB & AA) Conditions over 7 Furlongs

Owner/trainer/jockey Mark Cooper scored his second win of the campaign on **Megabond** (Danhill Dancer x Apple Peeler) – who scored over 6f at Notts. This favourite was always travelling well and asserted his authority from the back straight and sprinted clear in the home straight showing a decent turn of foot to win going away at the line by three lengths from Burnley. The latter ran another solid race, running on determinedly in the final furlong to hold onto second from a one paced Golden Peacock, who looked a little tapped for toe but to his credit kept up to his work to hold onto third.

The Royal Cavalry of Oman Handicap Stakes 0-105 over 1 Mile 6 Furlongs

Champion jockey Simon Walker was seen to great effect on HH Shiekh Mohammed's classy colt **Kepassa** (Akbar x Kesperla); he led from start to finish gradually winding up the pace along the back straight and when challenged by Aljaareh in the home straight dug really deep to hold on and managed to get home by a length. Winning trainer Bill Smith said "He's a decent colt and he stays all day". The moderate pace did Aljaareh no favours and he pulled hard along the back straight, but in the end didn't have the pace to get past the winner, whilst Maestro Al Maury wasn't disgraced, whipping them in down the home straight for third.

The DA Adios Handicap Stakes 0-55 over 6 Furlongs

Al Sarab Al Azrak and Egypt cut out the running and went a fair clip down the back straight, but coming into the final two furlongs it looked as if the race was in the bag for The Way To Go. She ran on well in the final furlong but the jockey was caught napping at the line, and Fred Offord riding like a man on a mission on **Plus** (Djouras Tu x Sherrie Noreen) cut through the pack in the final half furlong and snatched a win from the jaws of defeat giving trainer David Paton his first win of the season. Egypt was legless two furlongs out and somehow her owner/trainer/jockey Caroline De Wilde managed to coax a jet of energy from this mare who seemed to sprout wings in the final furlong and snatch second at the line, leaving The Way To Go to claim third.