

Dubai International Arabian Race Day
Newbury Sunday 17th July

Review by Paul Simmons, photos courtesy of thejockey.co.uk



Supporters of Dubai Day International Arabian Raceday were this year treated to a traditional English summer downpour, but the 12,000 people in attendance refused to have their racing spirit dampened and were rewarded with some top class Arabian racing.

Once again the Dubai International Arabian Raceday boasted some of the finest Arabian race horses in the world, competing in Group races and top class competitive handicaps for domestic runners. Patron of the Dubai Summer Festival, HH Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum landed three winners on the day; unveiling some potential superstars with The Private Banking from Emirates NBD International Stakes winner AKTAR LOTOIS, The Emirates Equestrian Federation International Stakes (Group 2 PA) winner USIMIR DE MONTEGUT and runaway winner of The Jebel Ali Racecourse Premier Handicap Stakes, EUSTRAL.

Qatar based Julian Smart scored a brace of Group 1 victories for HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani and Al Shahania Stud with AZIZ and ASRAA MIN ALBARQ winning The Al Hai Group Zaabeel International Stakes (Group 1 PA) and The Shadwell Dubai International Stakes (Group 1 PA) respectively. The latter causing an upset by beating world class performers NO RISK AL MAURY and JAAFER.

French trainers fared well on the day, Robert Litt took The Shadwell Farm Hatta International Stakes (Group 1 PA), a race for mares only, with SANAGHAM. Thierry Lemer won the Juvenile's race with USIMIR DE MONTEGUT and François Rohaut landed the International Conditions with AKTAR LOTOIS.

The opening handicap was won by SYRAH GRIS after a thrilling finish with RAZAN repaying trainer Adam Newey's faith. Welsh trainer Delyth Thomas took the closing handicap with tough as teak handicapper NOBLE ATHLETE.

Another phenomenal days racing with some superb finishes and strong fields from The UK, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Sweden, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and The United Arab Emirates all vying for an eye watering £129,000 worth of prize money. Further evidence to the thoroughbred fraternity that Arab racing is alive, well and booming.

Emirates Airline Premier Handicap Stakes (Seven furlongs, for horses rated 35-75).

A superb training performance here by Adam Newey with The Almost All Partnership's **SYRAH GRIS (Khotoubia x Akara De Syrah)**, who lost his maiden tag in fine style under a well judged and energetic ride from Frankie McDonald. There was some serious market support for the winner who was backed down from 14/1 to 6/1 co-favourite but he gave his backers a few tense moments as he



battled for victory in the final furlong but Frankie McDonald just got SYRAH GRIS home by a head from the Royston French ridden RAZEN (owned by The Royal Cavalry Of Oman).

The field broke smartly from the stalls with top weight MISWADAH blazing a trail and RAZEN stalking in behind. At the two furlong marker French went for home on RAZEN with MISWADAH, SYRAH GRIS, SENOR DOUBLECHECK and JAAMAHIR all chasing in behind, but as they entered the final furlong, the ultimate victor SYRAH GRIS and RAZEN



went head to head for a spectacular start to the meeting. Speaking afterwards delighted winning trainer Adam Newey said: *"We were always targeting him at this race and deliberately kept him fresh for today. I am pleased all the time, effort and hard work paid off on the day. I am also pleased for his owner Linda Cross who has been very patient"*. Part-Owner Linda Cross won this race back in 2006 with Almost All and was

thrilled to have another winner at this valuable meeting *"I always liked this horse and we felt he had a decent race in him. Adam has done a great job to get him to win today on only his second start of the season"*.

RAZEN (Saut Du Loup x Hadhoodh) ran a very brave race in defeat and was unlucky not to get home, the rain softened ground perhaps working against him. He has been second four times this season and always goes down fighting. He led the charge to the line here and although he was once again was denied the taste of victory, he should get his head in front soon. SENOR DOUBLECHECK (Bengali D'Albret x Mais (Mamluk) ran a superb race two and a half lengths back in third for trainer David Paton. Always handy and travelling well he chased the first two hard inside the final furlong and although never a threat he was well clear of the field and this effort represents his best race to date. There is clearly more to come from this tough handicapper. HH Sheikh Hamdan's colt BALIK D'ALBRET (Al Sakbe x Malika D'Albret) was always in the rear but to his credit ploughed on past beaten horses in the final furlong to claim fourth ahead of a one paced AWRAAQ. He will be interesting when upped in trip.



The Private Banking From Emirates NBD International Stakes (One mile two furlongs, for horses that have not won a Group Race or equivalent).

An extremely impressive victory here for HH Sheikh Hamdan's smart entire **AKTAR LOTOIS** (Akbar x Larissa Lotois). The 9/4 favourite was given a superb, confident ride from French jockey François-Xavier Bertras to land a scorching seven length victory for French trainer François Rohaut. The pace was set in the early stages by VIZIR DES CEDRES

with AKTAR LOTOIS and TIDARBRET all prominent. As they hit the 3 furlong marker TIDARBRET set sail for home under a determined Steve Harrison with AKTAR LOTOIS and MU'AZZAZ travelling ominously well in behind, but as they entered the final two furlongs Bertras made smooth headway with AKTAR LOTOIS and this powerful athlete galloped easily clear to record an emphatic victory. Last year's winner MU'AZZAZ (Amer x Massamarie) stayed on one paced inside the final furlong to take second, he travelled well but once again



found little under pressure and doesn't look to be the most genuine performer. TIDARBRET (Bengali D'Albret x Iktidar (Djelfor)) ran another great race here (he was second in this race last year), he travelled well and ran on strongly in the closing stages. This effort represents a clear return to form and he is one to watch next time out now he is back on song.

The Al Hai Group Zaabel International Stakes (Group 1 PA)

(Six furlongs).

This race looked wide open on paper but in the end it was won in convincing style by the Julian Smart trained **AZIZ (Amer x Aziza**



ALPHA TOURS

D'Aroco). A smart performer last term (second in *The President of The UAE Cup (Group 1 PA)* *UK Arabian Derby*) and clearly versatile, he proved that this step back in trip was of no inconvenience. He showed the field a clean pair of heels when unleashing a devastating turn of foot inside the final furlong to win by four lengths going away for owner/breeder Qatar based HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani (Al Shahania Farm). The 5/4 favourite, AZIZ made the running from the start under a masterful ride from Alan Munro. He quickly asserted his authority in the final two furlongs with MUTAFANI, EL ADJBAN, EMMAMER and ZAYIN BARAKALDO all mounting a challenge, but he never looked in danger and sprinted home for an impressive victory. Speaking afterwards winning trainer Julian Smart said "He has always been an extremely classy racehorse and shows plenty of raw speed at home. We hoped his class and talent would give him the edge today and he has won that impressively."



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second inside the final couple of furlongs and although always being held by the winner he was well clear of the field. He remains a smart sprinter and is a big danger for *The Royal Cavalry Of Oman Clarendon International Stakes (Group 3 PA)* sprint at Bath in August.

Back in third was a superb performance from the Lesley Hartley owned and bred EL ADJBAN (Makzan x Shunah (Shomran)). He was held up in the early stages, made good headway to go third inside the final two furlongs and maintained his pace and position in spite of the relentless challenge in behind from EMMAMER (Amer x Emma Du Cayrou). This is another fine effort from this talented homebred and he too has a good chance of victory at Bath based on this performance. His delighted owner/breeder Lesley Hartley (who trained his dam Shunah to win a Group 3 sprint in the 1990's) said *"I am over the moon with his run, he was so impressive at Kempton when winning the Premier handicap and to come 3rd in a Group 1 on Dubai Day is a dream come true, I am extremely proud of him."*



The Shadwell Farm Hatta International Stakes (Group 1 PA)

(One mile two furlongs, for Mares & Fillies).

AREEJ was sent off 4/6 favourite but the bookies could breath a sigh of relief as smart French owned/trained and bred mare **SANAGHAM (Al Sakbe x Ennagh)** denied AREEJ her first Group 1 victory.

In doing so SANAGHAM landed the biggest win of her career for trainer Robert Litt.

The field broke smartly with UK handicapper KATWALK setting a decent gallop and MI TEMPS DE PIBOUL settled in behind. AREEJ, LAQATAAT and BURNING FANCY were all in contention and SANAGHAM was settled at the rear of the field. As they entered the final two furlongs Alan Munro set sail for home on AREEJ and she started to pull clear of the field. SANAGHAM was staying on well in her slip stream, but as they entered the final furlong Philippe Sogorb swept the French Mare into the lead and although AREEJ battled back it was SANAGHAM who had the edge and she held on by half a length to land victory for French owner/breeder Madame Litt and trainer Robert Litt.



AREEJ (Amer x Akie Croix Noir) was gallant in defeat, she rallied hard in the final furlong but seemed to find the good to soft ground a touch too testing, but she looks well up to winning at this level on a faster surface. BURNING FANCY (Burning Sand x Sayquins and Lace) ran a brilliant race for Athbah Stud. The talented Grade 1 sprinter from America had won a Group 3 sprint last year in the UK and many thought she wouldn't stay the trip, but she is clearly versatile and stayed every yard. She threw down a big challenge two furlongs out and fought on well to hold onto third ahead of a staying on LAQATAAT (Bengali D'Albret x Qosheyya). The latter ran a brave race on her Group level debut and has done all her winning on good/firm ground and perhaps, like AREEJ, didn't handle the soft going.

The Shadwell Dubai International Stakes (Group 1 PA) (One mile two furlongs).

A fascinating clash between two of the best Arabian race horses in the world, former dual Shadwell Dubai winner NO RISK AL



MAURY and last year's winner and Kahayala Classic winner JAAFER. However, to the bookies delight there was a surprise win as pace maker and stable second string ASRAA MIN ALBARQ firmly established himself as a serious group horse in his own right. He put up a power packed performance to gain his first Group 1 victory in Europe under a superb bold ride from Tadhg O'Shea. The Julian Smart trained colt recorded a pillar to post victory in this valuable renewal. With the rest of the runners settled in behind, O'Shea stole a march on the field as they entered the home straight. Although JAAFER and NO RISK AL MAURY

both mounted a serious challenge inside the final two furlongs, **ASRAA MIN ALBARQ (Amer x Akie Croix Noir)** dug deep, had too much pace and held on by just under two lengths for an impressive victory for breeder HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani, owner Al Shahania Stud and trainer Julian Smart. Speaking after the race Smart said *"He has always been a good performer and his Group 2 win here in June was impressive, he has top class form but always seems to find one too good, but he loved the ground here and his stamina kicked in and helped him outstay the others."*

NO RISK AL MAURY (Kesberoy x Nectarine Al Maury) lost nothing in defeat back in second, many thought he would struggle to handle the soft going, but this amazing race horse has the heart of a lion and he gave his all in the final furlong; and although he couldn't catch the winner he did win his battle for second. He remains a phenomenal performer at 9 yrs of age and is a credit to his trainer Gill Duffield. JAAFER (Amer x Madjela) was half a length back in third, he travelled well and came with his challenge inside the final two furlongs. He had a tough fight in the final furlong for second but just conceded the reserve slot to NO RISK AL MAURY in the final few strides. JAAFER was in turn clear of the Belgium raider OMNI DA (Ircalan DA x Haliyana El Kendal).



The Emirates Equestrian Federation International Stakes (Group 2 PA) (Seven furlongs, for three year olds only).

Unbeaten French filly SAHLAMBO was sent off the 5/4 favourite but in the end she could only manage fourth after pulling very hard in the early stages. It was HH Sheikh Hamdan's smart juvenile colt **USIMIR DE MONTEGUT (Tidjani x Indiana De Sol)** who came out on top under another master class ride from Richard Hills for French trainer Thierry Lemer. The field set off at a sedate gallop with the young runners reluctant to make the running, in the end MESTOR went



to the head of the field with MKEEFA, SAHLAMBO AND AZIZ AL SHAHANIA travelling well in behind. As they entered the final two furlongs MESTOR quickened the pace but Hills was cruising on USIMIR DE MONTEGUT and as these two horses hit the final furlong they were nip and tuck all the way to the line with HH Sheikh Hamdan's USIMIR DE MONTEGUT getting up on the line by a head.

MESTOR (Mahabb x Mendra) ran brave race back in second for The Royal Cavalry Of Oman, he made a bold bid for victory and was unlucky to lose in the shadow of the post; but he remains a smart prospect and is one to watch next year. The in form Julian Smart yard unleashed a potential superstar with AZIZ AL SHAHANIA (Prince D'Orient x Baldora De Brugere) who made a dazzling racecourse debut. He was always in the front three and when the first two kicked for home he chased them all the way to the line. He should lose his maiden tag soon. SAHLAMBO (Munjiz x CR Samborsta) lost all chance of victory in the early stages of the race when pulling too hard, the result may have been very different if she had been allowed to make the running.



The Jebel Ali Racecourse Premier Handicap Stakes

(One mile five furlongs, for horses rated 0-115).

KALIKEAUBA made a brave attempt here at recording a

start to finish victory for Athbah Stud. He jumped well from the stalls and was soon leading the field at a good working gallop; he looked to have the race at his mercy, but EUSTRAL and his stablemate MOSHAHED were both travelling well in behind. As they entered the



final two furlongs MOSHAHED went to the head of affairs but EUSTRAL was travelling with consummate ease under a confident ride from Richard Hills. In the last two hundred yards 3/1 favourite **EUSTRAL (Al Sakbe x Danse Avec L'Eau)** easily galloped clear and outstayed the field in fine style to record a four length victory for owner HH Sheikh Hamdan (his third win of the meeting) and trainer Gill Duffield. MOSHAHED (Chndaka x Nirva De Cardonne) was runner up for the second year in a row, settling for the minor placing behind his impressive stablemate. He stayed on well in the straight and was kept up to his work to hold onto second. KALIKEAUBA (Darike x Rilkel) ran a brave race 2 lengths back in third, he battled on hard in the final furlong to hold onto his position from a staying on MAHRA

(Bengali D'Albret x Sophie Du Loup).



The Derrinstown Stud Handicap Stakes (One mile, for horses rated 50-90).



Delyth Thomas won the opening handicap last season and this year she finished the meeting with an all out victory from her prolific winner **NOBLE ATHLETE (Dorwan Du Cayrou x Noble Dame)**, who had won two weeks earlier at Wolverhampton (where Delyth had landed a treble). Talented young jockey Matthew Stanley (a name to remember) won a Novice Rider race on NOBLE ATHLETE on his last outing and once again he showed courage and judgement to make all on the rain softened ground, galloping the field into submission to score a resounding victory. He lead on the far rail throughout and when MAGHAZI threw down the gauntlet inside the final furlong this gallant handicapper dug deep and found more under an energetic ride from Stanley to win by just under a length. Commenting after the race his delighted owner and trainer Delyth Thomas said *“I thought he would run well after his last win, but this was a hot handicap and I didn’t think he would win. He is such a tough horse and Matthew rode a superb race from the front.”*

MAGHAZI (Chndaka x Nirva De Cardonne) has run some great races in defeat this season, he was always travelling well behind NOBLE ATHLETE and made a bold bid inside the final furlong but couldn’t get past the winner. He remains a class act at this level. LOURAN (Doran x Mangaline Du Loup) was making her seasonal debut and did well to land third in such a competitive race under top weight. She was held up with run and came with her effort inside the final two furlongs and although she couldn’t reach the front pair, she was easily clear of a one paced JUHOOD (Al Sakbe x Tamani).



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