



## 32<sup>ND</sup> DUBAI INTERNATIONAL ARABIAN RACES

Even the rain could not diminish the importance of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Dubai International Arabian Race (DIAR) meeting to the knowledgeable crowd of seasoned Arabian racegoers or the excitement of the top class action for those experiencing Arabian racing for the first time. The highlights of the day, the three Group 1 PA races, all lived up to expectations, confirming established champions and heralding a new one.

The Emirates Premier Handicap Stakes over a mile went to Aghsaan, getting the DIAR patron, HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum off to a flying start with a homebred winner. An emphatic four length victory from Karar and the favourite Katonahotinroof MHF, she was ridden by His Highness's retained jockey Paul Hanagan.

This winning formula was repeated in the second, to give His Highness and trainer Gill Duffield a double for the day. Rasaasy looked a good horse in the making battling on strongly to win the Emirates Equestrian Federation International Stakes by half a length from Selketh. A seven furlong Group 2 contest confined to three year olds, he was following in the hoofprints of his half sister Salaama, who had won this event last year.

The Emirates NBD International Stakes that followed was a mile and a quarter conditions event attracting a number of quality performers who had just missed out in Group company. Olivier Peslier gave a masterful performance on the Royal Cavalry of Oman's Vulcain Du Clos, not producing him until the final half furlong, to draw clear of Bon Baiser De Faust and Rasi.

There was further joy for the Royal Cavalry of Oman in the first of the Group 1 events, the six furlong Jebel Ali Racecourse Za'Abel International Stakes. Al Mouhannad was on course to record a hattrick in this contest and she did so in style from Meeyur and Ghazwa. Another horse who requires holding up, she confirmed her dominance in a matter of strides and hopefully will return next year for a record fourth attempt.





The Group 1 Hatta International Stakes had a new sponsor in Dubai Duty Free and they could not have wished for a better start than to have the 2014 World's joint Top Rated Arabian racehorse, Djainka Des Forges in the line up. Not only clear on ratings, she was bidding for back to back wins. Harry Bentley was handed the lead on Djainka Des Forges more than three furlongs out and only had to shake the reins for HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Thani's mare to assert her superiority, crossing the line two and a half lengths clear of Lora and a fast finishing Hurra who was only a head behind in third.

Trainer Julian Smart had little time to enjoy the celebrations as he had Gazwan in the feature event of the day the Group 1 Shadwell Dubai International Stakes over the same trip of a mile and a quarter. The quality field included two previous winners in Djet Taouy and Al Hibaab, plus Lahoob who had started his season with a Group 1 win. In the closing stages it looked for a few strides as if Djet Taouy would regain his crown, but he was no match for Gazwan, who with ears pricked, scored by half a length.



Bentley was at least allowed to rest on his laurels as Smart's Al Shahania representative in the Rotana Hotels and Resorts Premier Handicap Stakes, Abhar, was to be ridden by leading amateur jockey, Simon Walker. Walker steered him to a six length victory, bringing an end to Gill Duffield and HH Sheikh Hamdan's nine year dominance of this one mile five furlong contest. She did train the second Azizi, who had won this event last year.

The day concluded with a sixteen runner cavalry charge for the National Academy of Indian Payroll Handicap Stakes over seven furlongs. This was won in taking style by Kao Kat MHF for Mohammed Nasser Al Hashar, giving jockey Simon Walker a double. Trainer Beverley Deutron had won the corresponding event last year, and also supplied the second, Maghazi, with Vindetta putting up an improved performance to be third.

- Text and pictures by Debbie Burt (equine creative media)