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RACE REPORTS



Made In Japan makes perfect start

by Bruce Jackson

MADE IN JAPAN, last leg of a Philip Hobbs hat-trick, had bookmakers sitting up and taking notice of the Triumph Hurdle winner returning to Cheltenham for Arkle success next March after a highly proficient start over fences.

Paddy Brennan, riding out his claim in the process, was always oozing confidence on the four-year-old, who did not need the help of getting all the allowances to beat market rival Greenhope without having to be shown the whip.

Admittedly Greenhope ruined his chasing debut by constantly running down his fences as Made In Japan measured his like a horse double his age but Brennan only had to nudge him up the run-in.

Corals made him 10-1 second favourite behind 4-1 shot Fundamentalist, who has plenty of other Cheltenham engagements, while Victor Chandler and Paddy Power went 14-1 from 20-1.

Sarah Hobbs, wife of winning trainer Philip Hobbs, said: "He has got plenty of speed and is an exciting prospect. He has schooled very well at home and we just hoped he would produce it on the racecourse. He did give Richard Johnson a cut chin when the horse he was schooling with ran out and he followed but Paddy said the horse was only interested in measuring his fences and couldn't have jumped better."

Brennan, 23, has ridden out his claim in under five seasons, having moved to Britain from beginning with Jim Bolger through two years with Paul Nicholls and he is now into a second season with Hobbs.

Paul Flynn partnered the other two legs of the stable's near 15-1 hat-trick when throwing plans out of the saddle on **Mr Fluffy** in the beginners' chase.

The field failed to jump off when started and after an early crawl, Flynn grabbed the initiative which looked to be decisive as he found a willing partner who outjumped and outstayed favourite Champagne Harry.

Sarah Hobbs said: "It was brave decision as Philip had said to hold the horse up to get the three miles."

Everything went to plan on 1-2 favourite **Lord Henry**, who added to a facile win at Taunton under his winner's penalty in the latest EBF novices' hurdle qualifier. Flynn again took the bull by the horns and although Lord Henry ran wide around the grandstand bend, that was the only worrying moment as he popped round to comfortably beat Harry Blade.

Dark Society landed a gamble on his first hurdling effort in 643 days to continue the best year for his in-form trainer Tony Carroll, who was detained at the stables on business with the local council.

Wayne Hutchinson rode a confident race on the six-year-old to come from the back of the field into the home bend to cruise right away at the last.

Stephen Foster, managing director of Group 1 Racing, who had early success with Group-class Linpac West on the Flat, said: "We have four horses but are off to the sales tomorrow and this has certainly put us in the mood for more. He is the best we have had since King William, who got beat here on the only other time we have had a runner at the track."

Europa, who was a session topper at the Doncaster Sales in August, won the handicap chase for his new connections of owner Trevor Hemmings and trainer Ferdy Murphy coming off being pulled up in Grade 2 company at Aintree on his first start last month.

Barry Murphy, son and assistant to his father, said: "Jason said he felt a different horse to Aintree and we have done a lot of schooling with him and the key to him is good ground. He is an exciting horse to look forward to."

Glacial Sunset was another to banish memories of failing to complete when enjoying making the running under top weight in the three-mile handicap hurdle for trainer Colin Tinkler and jockey Tom Doyle.

Star performer

FRIDAY RACING

- Best Mate
- Exeter
- Windsor
- Wolverhampton
- Fairyhouse

THURSDAY RACING

- Wincanton
- Market Rasen
- Hereford
- Clonmel
- Rule Supreme

WEDNESDAY RACING

- Hexham
- Kempton
- Southwell
- Downpatrick
- France
- Italy

TUESDAY RACING

- Newton Abbot
- Lingfield
- Towcester
- France

TIPSTER STATISTICS

- Naps table
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Made In Japan, showed himself a rising star in the novice chasing ranks with a proficient debut

How can that happen?

Europa and Glacial Sunset, winning after being pulled up ignominiously last time.

Quote of the day

"What a great way to lose my claim, being given a chance on a horse like that," conditional Paddy Brennan on the privilege of getting the ride on Triumph Hurdle winner Made In Japan.

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