

DDF International Weekend delivers big race double



On day two of the Dubai Duty Free International Weekend at Newbury Racecourse, UK, Alkumait took the Group 2 Dubai Duty Free Mill Reef Stakes by three quarters of a length victory

Alkumait completed a big race double for His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, smashing the six furlongs course record in the process, when taking the Group 2 Dubai Duty Free Mill Reef Stakes on day two of the Dubai Duty Free International Weekend at Newbury Racecourse, UK, on Saturday September, 19.

The meeting marked 25 years of outstanding support for British horseracing by the leading international airport retailer. The race took place behind closed doors this year, forcing the absence of members of Dubai Duty Free's senior management team for the first time in the history of its sponsorship.

Ridden by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan's retained jockey, Jim Crowley, Alkumait went from last place to first place to score three quarters of a length victory over Andrew Balding's well-fancied Fivethousandtoone.

"It is early days for this horse, it was only his third run and he's still a work in progress. I think he's pretty smart and he showed a good attitude today," says Marcus Tregoning, winning trainer.

The victory provided Jim Crowley with a second Dubai Duty Free Mill Reef Stakes. "I was really impressed. [Alkumait] came back a lot better than we went down and switched off nicely in the race. It was all smooth and he showed a good turn of foot. I would say he is right up there with the best of them this season," adds Crowley.

The double was initiated by the Mark Johnston-trained Erlaqam, who returned to winning form in the Group 3 Dubai Duty Free Legacy Cup earlier in the afternoon beating four rivals including Desert Encounter, who was bidding to win the race for the third time.

There was also success on the day for Godolphin and H.H Sheikh Ahmed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, with the Godolphin blue carried to victory by William Buick aboard Lazuli in the Group 3 Dubai International Airport World Trophy, while Ilaraab took the valuable Dubai Duty Free Handicap.

Friday's feature noted a return to the winning enclosure of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's familiar maroon and white silks, now registered to H.H Sheikha Al Jalila Racing, when Glorious Journey completed a treble on the day for jockey, James Doyle, in the Listed Dubai Duty Free Cup.