

Sous Strikes for Mighty Moore



Ryan Moore enjoyed a fantastic Royal Ascot, recording no less than six wins.

I love the racing at Royal Ascot. Multiple group ones, ultra competitive sprints, some decent handicaps and of course the Gold Cup provide for what is undoubtedly one of the finest week's racing of the flat season.

However I thoroughly dislike everything on the periphery. I have no interest in what colour Her Majesty decides to wear each day or the rather archaic looking royal parade.

I can do without top hats and morning suits, colossal overdramatic headgear that passes for hats and thoroughly uncomfortable looking footwear.

For me Royal Ascot is purely about racing and last week I was delighted that the only bet I placed turned out to be a winning wager thanks to bumping into an acquaintance in the supermarket last Thursday.

Given that our knowledge of each other's existence stems from a mutual interest in horse racing it was hardly surprising that the conversation immediately turned to Ascot.

He thought Aidan O'Brien would have a good day and then imparted a nugget of information that resulted in my winning wager.

Pique Sous, owned by the Supreme Racing Club of which he is a member and trained by national hunt maestro Willie Mullins would travel over for the last race of the meeting, the Queen Alexandra over 2m5f on Saturday.

I was hesitant to ask if the group were making the journey to Ascot to join in the frivolity or if the horse had a serious chance of success.

My question was answered when my pal revealed that Ryan Moore had been booked to ride. Acquiring the services of the best jockey riding at the moment is an act of serious intent and so I made a mental note to have one bet on Saturday; Pique Sous in the Queen Alexandra.

It would have been easy to miss the race. Television coverage of the Irish Open from Fota Island had just finished up and the World Cup match between Germany and Ghana was underway.

The race began just after half past five and for much of the early stages it looked as my friend and his fellow Supreme Racing Club members' journey to Ascot would be in vain.

Pique Sous was pulling like a proverbial train and looked to be expending far too much energy. He began to make headway however down the back straight and was well in contention as the leaders rounded the home bend.

Pushed out to the line by the brilliant Moore Pique Sous quashed any doubts about his stamina with an impressive one and a half lengths win over Aidan O'Brien's El Salvador.

It was an amazing performance from a horse who almost lost his life to colic last October and a second win in Royal Ascot's longest race for Mullins following on from Simenon two years ago.

A clearly delighted but very emotional Mullins dedicated the victory to a member of his staff who suffered a brain hemorrhage on Friday and remains quite ill in hospital.

As the members of the Supreme Racing Club piled into the parade ring to begin their celebrations Mullins' words reminded us, as if we need reminding, that there's much more to life than saddling a winner at Royal Ascot.