



Prix de l'Opéra Longines : Wild Illusion loves France

Last years' winner of the Group 1 Qatar Prix Marcel Boussac, **Wild Illusion** (Dubawi) won the Prix de l'Opéra Longines (Gr1), after having troubles to enter in the starting stalls. The representative of Godolphin finished in front of **Magic Wand** (Galileo), who looked like the winner for a while, and also beat the French contender **Homérique** (Exchange Rate) who made a good final effort. Wild Illusion found her preferred distance over 2000m and should now head towards Breeders' Cup Fillies and Mares Turf.

How they ran

1st – Wild Illusion : She caused plenty of troubles to enter in the starting stalls (her connections had requested to enter her last in the stalls). Despite this, she took an excellent start and traveled in fourth position during the race. 300m before the finish line she started accelerating and took over progressively Magic Wand and finished more strongly than the finishing distance shows.

2nd – Magic Wand : Well placed on the rail, looked like the future winner but finally had to downarm the victory to Wild Illusion.

3rd – Homérique : She traveled just behind Wild Illusion as she started accelerating 300m before the finish line. However she couldn't quite follow her effort and finished with and had a good finish to challenge the two fillies finishing first and second.

4th – With You : Made up a lot of ground on the outside, turning very wide, without worrying the leaders.

5th – Well Timed : Always in the race behind Wild Illusion, made up her final furlongs in the middle of the field without challenging the superiority of the leaders.

6th – My Sister Nat : Traveled in the rear end of the field. Produced her effort late in the middle of the field gaining some ground in the end, but couldn't catch up the leaders.

7th – Navaro Girl : In the second part of the field by the rail, tried to follow Wild Illusion as she accelerated in the middle of the pack. Then followed in her rhythm and got beat by My Sister Nat in the end. She was also slightly disturbed by Well Timed in the middle of the home stretch.

8th – Athena : Couldn't threaten the leaders.

9th – Urban Fox : In a good position and ready for a fight, but weakened progressively on the home stretch.

10th – Lady Frankel : Jumped out badly and never played a role in the race.

11th – Castellar : Third position during the race but couldn't progress in the final straight.

12th – Rhododendron : The front runner, weakened very quickly finishing far from the leaders.

13th – L'Arc : Tried to make an effort when arriving to the home stretch without a success.

14th – Desert Diamond : In the second part of the field during the race, couldn't make any illusions finishing far off.

15th – Winter Lightning : Never dangerous. Finished last far off from others.

Night of England : Declared non runner.

The reactions of the connections

Charles Appleby (trainer of Wild Illusion, 1st)

« That was a brilliant race. She is a very tough filly. We tried 2400m in the Oaks, but she was disappointing and her preferred distance is definitely 2000m. I thought she looked magnificent in the parade ring. William rode her with plenty of confidence. She never gives up. This has always been her objective since the Nassau Stakes. She should run the Breeder's Cup Fillies and Mares.

Aidan O'Brien (trainer of Magic Wand, 2nd)

« She ran really well like in most of her outings this year. I am not sure she will run again this year. The options are open, but we will have to see how she comes out from this race. »

Francis-Henri Graffard (trainer of Homérique, 3rd)

« We wanted the jockey to ride her « off ». When the winner accelerated, our filly lost her rhythm and the jockey respected her. She ran well and finished with good action. She will finish her season with this race. My Sister Nat surprised her jockey Mickael Barzalona in the start and she had hard time following the rhythm of the race. She confirms her quality after all. »

Freddy Head (trainer of With You, 4th)

« She was caught by speed in the start and had troubles of following the race. Once in the front, she never had much gas, but produced a good effort to finish well. I believe she needs more distance as she ages. »

Jean-Pierre Carvalho (trainer of Well Timed, 5th)

« She gave what she had to give today. Her performance is better than in the Vermeille, as today she found her ideal distance. Her jockey gave her a good ride. We have no regrets. She will retire to stud in the end of the season, but she could run once in Rome in November. »

Statistics

<i>Year</i>	<i>Winner</i>	<i>Trainer</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Jockey</i>	<i>Time</i>
2018	Wild Illusion	C. Appleby	Godolphin	W. Buick	2'04''32
2017	Rhododendron	A. O'Brien	Mme Magnier/M. Tabor/D. Smith	J. Heffernan	2'03''60
2016	Speedy Boarding	J. Fanshawe	Helena Springfield Ltd	F. Tylicki	2'02''03

2015	Covert Love	H. Palmer	Fomo Syndicate	P. Smullen	2'04''43
2014	We Are	F. Head	G. Strawbridge	T. Jarnet	2'02''33