

Tuesday 10th March

CHELTENHAM



1.20 SKY BET SUPREME NOVICES' HURDLE (Grade 1) (1) 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 1 **(8) OLD PARK STAR | (6) MIGHTY PARK | (11) TALK THE TALK**

2.00 SINGER ARKLE CHALLENGE TROPHY NOVICES' CHASE (Grade 1) (1) 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)

RACE 2 **(4) LULAMBA | (3) KOPEK DES BORDES | (7) KARGESE**

2.40 MCCOY CONTRACTORS JUVENILE HANDICAP HURDLE (Fred Winter) (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 3 **(7) WINSTON JUNIOR | (8) MANLAGA | (9) SARATOGA**

3.20 TRUSTMARQUE ULTIMA HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 3m1f (5030 Metres)

RACE 4 **(1) IROKO | (4) JAGWAR | (14) MYRETOWN**

4.00 UNIBET CHAMPION HURDLE CHALLENGE TROPHY (Grade 1) (1) 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 5 **(9) LOSSIEMOUTH | (7) BRIGHTERDAYSAHEAD | (4) THE NEW LION**

4.40 SUN RACING PLATE HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 2½m44y (4060 Metres)

RACE 6 **(9) MADARA | (17) MCLAUREY | (15) ZURICH**

5.20 NATIONAL HUNT CHALLENGE CUP NOVICES' HANDICAP CHASE (2) 3m5f201y (6020 Metres)

RACE 7 **(11) ICEBERG THEORY | (9) BACKMERSACKME | (5) KURASSO BLUE**

KEY TO SYMBOLS

Top Rated: The horse with the best chance based solely on past form, specially tailored to a 0-100 scale.

Horses For Courses: A suitable track for the horse, compared to its lifetime record on similar courses as defined by Timeform's course data.

Jockey Uplift: The engaged rider has a notably higher Timeform Jockey Ranking than those who've ridden the horse on its most recent starts

Trainer Form: A hot trainer to follow, based on Timeform ratings-related measurements looking at the recent performance of runners.

1.20

SKY BET SUPREME NOVICES' HURDLE (Grade 1) (1) 4yo+ £150,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 1



Going: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Strong**

- 1**

BARON NOIR (IRE) (59) (D) **86**

38/13-1211 **6** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Alan King *Tom Bellamy*

Dual bumper scorer who has taken very well to hurdling, producing a taking effort when adding to December's Uttoxeter maiden success with a defeat of a useful rival (pair clear) in 2m Kempton novice (good) in January. Definitely more to come but this is a significant step up in class.
- 2**

EACHTOTHEIROWN (IRE) (51) (D) **89**

22-151 **7** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Barry Connell, Ireland *Sean Flanagan*

Second in both bumpers and went one better in Galway maiden hurdle in October. Still looked in need of experience when well-held fifth in Royal Bond but resumed his progression with easy Thurles handicap win in January. This much harder but the yard has had a win and second in this in recent years.
- 3**

EL CAIROS (FR) (40) (D) **87**

15-2F1 **6** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland *J. W. Kennedy*

Smart in bumpers for Gary & Josh Moore and would have made impressive winning start over hurdles but for stumbling and falling after the last at Leopardstown over Christmas. Survived a bad mistake at the last to win a maiden at Thurles 5 weeks later. Has the potential for considerable improvement.
- 4**

KOKTAIL BRUT (FR) (37) (D) **89**

443-51174 **6** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland *Danny Gilligan*

Useful bumper winner and quickly reached a similar standard over hurdles, winning Punchestown maiden and Grade 2 Royal Bond at Fairyhouse in November. Better effort in 2m Grade 1 novices at Leopardstown since when 6½ lengths fourth to Talk The Talk last month. Jack Kennedy prefers El Cairos.
- 5**

LEADER D'ALLIER (FR) (43) (D) **85**

611-11121 **5** 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland *P. Townend*

Multiple bumper winner in France for Mathieu Pitart. Promising second in Leopardstown maiden on hurdle debut having joined Willie Mullins and easily landed short odds at Punchestown (2m, heavy) since. Potentially smart.
- 6**

MIGHTY PARK (IRE) (54) (D) **91**

1 **5** 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland *M. P. Walsh*

Closely related to King George VI Chase winner/Cheltenham Gold Cup runner-up Might Bite. Second in sole point last spring and made a striking winning start to his hurdle career when making all by a wide margin at Fairyhouse in January, jumping accurately and in command a long way out. Top prospect.
- 7**

MYDADDYPADDY (IRE) (74) (BF) **91**

1-112 **5** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Dan Skelton *Harry Skelton*

Easy bumper win last March and once again looked an exciting prospect when landing his first 2 hurdles. Beaten by Idaho Sun when odds on for Grade 1 Formby at Aintree over Christmas but this fluent jumper likely wasn't helped by the removal of the hurdles in the straight. Remains capable of better.
- 8**

OLD PARK STAR (IRE) (52) (CD) **100**

323-111 **6** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Nicky Henderson *Nico de Boinville*

Failed to win 3 bumpers for Paul Nicholls last season but has created a first-rate impression when winning all 3 hurdle starts for Nicky Henderson. Powered 18 lengths clear in Haydock Grade 2 last time and he'll be hard to beat with further progress likely.
- 9**

SAGEBOROUGH (FR) (100) (D) **78**

17 **5** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Paul Nolan, Ireland *S. F. O'Keeffe*

Made a winning debut in 14-runner maiden hurdle at Wexford in October but found the step up to Grade 2 company beyond him in the Royal Bond at Fairyhouse in November. Pitched in even deeper 100 days on. Outsider.

- 10**

SOBER GLORY (IRE) (31) (D) **91**

111-1411 **6** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Philip Hobbs & Johnson White *Ben Jones*

Made it 6 wins from only 7 starts under Rules with another dominant display from the front at Newbury (2m, soft) 31 days ago. This is a rise in class but he almost certainly has bigger performances in him.
- 11**

TALK THE TALK (FR) (37) (D) **96**

2-11F1 **5** 11-7 | 73.0kg

Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland *J. J. Slevin*

Likely would have been unbeaten over hurdles but for coming down at the last in Leopardstown Grade 1 over Christmas. Gained compensation for that when edging out Ballyfad in another Grade 1 there at the Dublin Racing Festival. Should go well.
- 12**

TOO BOSSY FOR US (IRE) (34) (D) **85**

7-51 **5** 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland *Harry Cobden*

Made his hurdle debut in the Triumph at this meeting last year, finishing seventh. Useful form in defeat on the Flat later in 2025 and made a successful return to hurdling in maiden company at Punchestown (2m, heavy) last month. Plenty more will be needed here, though.

12 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

7-4 Old Park Star, 5-1 Mighty Park, 6-1 Talk The Talk, 10-1 El Cairos, 11-1 Mydaddypaddy, 14-1 Sober Glory, 16-1 Leader D'allier, 40-1 bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:

Nicky Henderson's last 3 winners of the Supreme, Altior, Shishkin and Constitution Hill, have been out of the top drawer and OLD PARK STAR could be of a similar calibre himself judged on the way he quickened right away from very useful opposition at Haydock last time. This fluent-jumping 6-y-o has winning Cheltenham form already and can prove too strong for Mighty Park, who was hugely impressive on his Fairyhouse debut, and last month's Leopardstown Grade 1 winner Talk The Talk.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. OLD PARK STAR 2. MIGHTY PARK 3. TALK THE TALK

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

2025	Kopek des Bordes 5-11-7	4-6f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	11
2024	Slade Steel 6-11-7	7-2	Henry de Bromhead	Rachael Blackmore	11
2023	Marine Nationale 6-11-7	9-2	Barry Connell	M. J. M. O'Sullivan	14
2022	Constitution Hill 5-11-7	9-4jf	Nicky Henderson	Nico de Boinville	9
2021	Appreciate It 7-11-7	8-11f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	8

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

2.00**SINGER ARKLE CHALLENGE TROPHY NOVICES' CHASE (Grade 1) (1) 5yo+ £200,000 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)**

RACE 2

Going: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Weak****1 HANSARD (IRE) (73) (D) 86**

83097-412 8 11-7 | 73.0kg



Gary & Josh Moore

Caoilin Quinn

Useful handicap hurdler who stepped forward from his seasonal/chase debut when comfortably landing the odds in 3-runner maiden at Lingfield in December. Improved again when second to Mambonumberfive in Grade 2 Wayward Lad at Kempton over Christmas but this demands a good deal more.

2 JAX JUNIOR (17) (C, D) t 91

3P1-21411 7 11-7 | 73.0kg



Lucy Wadham

Tom Cannon

Three-time novice hurdle winner last season and has shown even better form when notching the same number of wins over fences this time round, easily taking Grade 2 Pencil at Kempton (20.5f, good) last time. He's smart but this looks an ultra-strong renewal.

3 KOPEK DES BORDES (FR) (113) (C, D) h 94

1/111-41 6 11-7 | 73.0kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

P. Townend

Winner of the Supreme on this day 12 months ago. Cruised clear in a Navan maiden chase on reappearance in November. His absence since (had surgery to remove a bone chip from his knee) means he lacks chase experience but he could be talented enough to cope.

4 LULAMBA (FR) (31) (D) ★ 100

112-1111 5 11-7 | 73.0kg



Nicky Henderson

Nico de Boinville

One of the leading juvenile hurdlers last season and has rapidly developed into an even better chaser, bolting up in Sandown Grade 1 novice before readily dispatching more experienced rivals in the Grade 2 Game Spirit at Newbury last month. Will be hard to beat again.

5 MAMBONUMBERFIVE (FR) (31) (D) 89

2P17-1113 5 11-7 | 73.0kg



Ben Pauling

Ben Jones

Much improved since sent chasing this term, winning first 3 starts, including a 7-length defeat of Hansard in the Grade 2 Wayward Lad at Kempton (2m, good) in December. Made mistakes when remote last of 3 in Kingmaker at Warwick and this race is likely to expose any frailties in his jumping.

6 STEEL ALLY (FR) (31) (D) t 95

21P2P-111 8 11-7 | 73.0kg



Sam Thomas

Dylan Johnston

Very useful hurdler who has taken it up another notch since chasing, winning all 3 starts, including Grade 2s at Ascot (19f, good to soft) and Warwick (2m, soft). Looks capable of even better.

7 KARGESE (FR) (36) (C, D) h 98

2/121-3212 6 11-0 | 69.9kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

D. E. Mullins

Smart hurdler who has quickly shown herself to be even better over fences, winning a Leopardstown maiden over Christmas before going down by only a neck to Romeo Coolio in the Irish Arkle there last month. Needs considering in receipt of weight all round.

7 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:**11-8 Lulamba, 2-1 Kopek Des Bordes, 11-2 Kargese, 14-1 Steel Ally, 40-1 bar****TIMEFORM VIEW:**

Two hugely exciting sorts clash here. LULAMBA has already had the chance to prove he's a top-class novice chaser courtesy of a pair Graded wins and can put that experience to good use and see off last year's Supreme hero Kopek des Bordes, who has been restricted to just the one run over fences. Kargese looks best of the rest in what promises to be a cracker.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**1. LULAMBA 2. KOPEK DES BORDES 3. KARGESE****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	Jango Baie 6-11-7	5-1	Nicky Henderson	Nico de Boinville	5
2024	Gaelic Warrior 6-11-7	2-1f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	10
2023	El Fabiolo 6-11-7	11-10f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	9
2022	Edwardstone 8-11-4	5-2f	Alan King	Tom Cannon	11
2021	Shishkin 7-11-4	4-9f	Nicky Henderson	Nico de Boinville	5

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

2.40

RACE 3

MCCOY CONTRACTORS JUVENILE HANDICAP HURDLE (Fred Winter) (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 4yo £80,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)**GBI RACING**Going: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Extreme**

1 BERTUTEA (FR) (36) (D) **89**
32-1P **4** 11-12 | 75.3kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland  **S. F. O'Keefe**
AW Flat winner in France. Also placed in 2 hurdles there last spring and made a successful start for Willie Mullins in maiden at Limerick (2m, heavy) over Christmas. Disappointed in Grade 1 at the Dublin Racing Festival but still early days with this excellent stable. A tongue tie goes on now.

2 BARBIZON (IRE) (36) (D) **95**
146 **4** 11-10 | 74.4kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland **Josh Williamson (5lb/2kg)**
Quickly reached useful level on the Flat for John Murphy and made a smooth transition to hurdling for Gordon Elliott when winning juvenile at Navan. Found out in graded races at Leopardstown since but no surprise were he to resume his progression for a yard traditionally strong in this race.

3 MADNESS D'ELLE (FR) (24) (D) **89**
321 **4** 11-9 | 73.9kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland  **D. E. Mullins**
Third at Auteuil on debut last spring. Couldn't land the odds (4/11) but shaped well when second of 15 in juvenile at Punchestown on return for new connections and duly went one better at Gowran (2m, heavy) last month. A mark in the 130s looks on the high side but there is surely more to come.

4 HARWA (FR) (35) (D) **93**
221 **4** 11-8 | 73.5kg



Paul Nolan, Ireland **Sean Flanagan**
Runner-up both starts in France for Marcel Rolland and created a good impression when going one better in Fairyhouse maiden (2m, heavy) on yard debut 5 weeks ago. His mark looks tough but he can likely improve.

5 DIGNAM (IRE) (114) (D) **93**
1115 **4** 11-7 | 73.0kg



Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland **Richard Deegan**
Fairly useful Flat performer who won his first 3 starts in juvenile hurdles last summer. Found out when stepped up to Group 1 level in France in November. Off since. Glen To Glen looks the stronger of the stable pair.

6 THE MIGHTY CELT (IRE) (24) **95**
15-32283 **4** 11-7 | 73.0kg



Dan Skelton **Harry Skelton**
Fairly useful in France for Noel George & Amanda Zetterholm. Off 3 months (had wind surgery), shaped well when 9¾ lengths third of 7 to Manlaga in Victor Ludorum at Haydock on first run for Dan Skelton, finishing with running left from too far back. No surprise to see him go well.

7 WINSTON JUNIOR (IRE) (52) **100**
221 **4** 11-7 | 73.0kg



Faye Bramley **J. W. Kennedy**
Useful maiden on Flat (stays 13f) for Jessica Harrington in Ireland and has made a very encouraging start to his hurdle career, runner-up twice before making all with ease at Ascot (2m, soft) in January. Capable of having a big say from an opening mark which looks very workable.

8 MANLAGA (IRE) (24) **99**
1-21 **4** 11-6 | 72.6kg



Nicky Henderson  **Nico de Boinville**
Won newcomers hurdle at Auteuil for Marcel Rolland last March and has stepped up on that form for new connections, finishing second to Manganese in listed at Doncaster before seeing off Pourquoi Pas Papa in the Victor Ludorum at Haydock. Definitely more to come.

9 SARATOGA (IRE) (31) **97**
332 **4** 11-6 | 72.6kg



Pdraig Roche, Ireland **M. P. Walsh**
Useful Flat winner for Aidan O'Brien and has shown progressive form in juvenile hurdles this winter. This has likely been the plan for a stable which has tasted recent success in this race with a JP McManus runner.

10 GLEN TO GLEN (IRE) (93) **95**
571 **4** 11-5 | 72.1kg



Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland **J. J. Slevin**
Useful Flat performer who left his first 2 runs over hurdles behind to win 17f Cork juvenile (soft) in December. Seemingly saved for this since by a yard seeking a hat-trick of wins in this ultra-competitive handicap.

11 MUSTANG DU BREUIL (FR) (17) (D, BF) **99**
113 **4** 11-5 | 72.1kg



Nicky Henderson  **James Bowen**
Promising individual who landed juvenile hurdle at Auteuil in October and followed up for new connections at Doncaster in February. Met with defeat for the first time but advanced his form when 3½ lengths third of 12 to Klub de Reve in Grade 2 Dovecote at Kempton 17 days ago.

12 POURQUOI PAS PAPA (FR) (24) (BF) **97**
22212 **4** 11-4 | 71.7kg



Paul Nicholls **Harry Cobden**
Yet to finish out of the first 2 in 5 outings over hurdles, winning a maiden at Wincanton before going down by 2¼ lengths to Manlaga in the Victor Ludorum at Haydock. Should give another good account for a stable which has had several run well in this down the years.

13 HARDY STUFF (USA) (45) (D) **95**
P417 **4** 11-4 | 71.7kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland **Sam Ewing**
Edged out Ole Ole and Munsif to win big-field juvenile at the Leopardstown Christmas meeting. Raced too keenly when well-held seventh in course Grade 2 on trials day. The yard's record in this makes him a tough one to discount but Jack Kennedy has seemingly been let off to partner Winston Junior.

14 AMMES (IRE) (130) (D) **99**
112 **4** 11-4 | 71.7kg



James Owen **Sean Bowen**
Useful on Flat and easy winner of 2 juvenile hurdles this autumn. Second at odds on in the listed Wensleydale at Wetherby at the end of October but it turns out he had plenty on up against Minella Study. Warmed up for this with a Flat run last month. Interesting.

15 MACKTOAD (FR) (24) (D) **91**
1145 **4** 11-4 | 71.7kg



Gary & Josh Moore **Caoinn Quinn**
French bumper winner who created a good impression when readily defeating Pourquoi Pas Papa on 2m Sandown hurdle debut but disappointed in the Finale at Chepstow and Victor Ludorum at Haydock since. The cheekpieces he wore last time are quickly discarded.

16 OLE OLE (FR) (73) **95**
3222 **4** 11-4 | 71.7kg



Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland **Keith Donoghue**
Second on three consecutive starts since joining from Hugo Merienne, on the latest edged out by the reopposing Hardy Stuff at Leopardstown (2m, good) over Christmas. Given a 10-week break ahead of this handicap debut.

17 QUINTA DO LAGO (FR) (55) (D) **93**
1163 **4** 11-4 | 71.7kg



Mrs J. Harrington, Ireland **Donagh Meyler**
Won first 2 starts but his limitations having seemingly been exposed the last twice. Makes handicap debut from a mark which demands plenty of improvement. Wears first-time cheekpieces.

18 PADDOCKWOOD (FR) (65) (D, BF) **89**
1415 **4** 11-4 | 71.7kg



Ben Pauling **Ben Jones**
Pair of soft-ground hurdle wins at Cagnes-sur-Mer for Mathieu Pitart this winter. Not obviously well treated for this British debut but in good hands so worth a second look in the betting.

19 KLYCOT (FR) (47) (D) **97**
4121 **4** 11-3 | 71.2kg



Richard Bandey **Harry Bannister**
Fairly useful winner on Flat in France who is proving steadily progressive over hurdles, winning juveniles at Exeter and Wetherby (both heavy) this winter. Handicap debut.

20 BIBE MUS (FR) (5lb/2kg ex) (3) (D) **97**
13221 **4** 11-3 | 71.2kg



Paul Nicholls **Sam Twiston-Davies**
Solid record over hurdles for Ross O'Sullivan in Ireland but still found a jolt of improvement when comfortably making a winning start for the Paul Nicholls yard in a Sandown juvenile handicap (soft) on Saturday. He's a player if coping with the quick turnaround.

2.40

RACE 3

MCCOY CONTRACTORS JUVENILE HANDICAP HURDLE (Fred Winter) (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 4yo £80,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)**GBI RACING****21 BANDJO (FR) (65) (D) 91**
6712F6 4 11-2 | 70.8kgGeorgina Nicholls **Finn Lambert** (31b/1kg)
Flat/hurdle winner in France for Mickael Seror. Finished 12½ lengths sixth of 9 in listed juvenile at Cagnes-Sur-Mer on his final start there, with reopposing Paddockwood 3½ lengths ahead in fifth. Others are more obvious.**22 MINO DES MOTTES (FR) (34) 89**
U1452 4 11-2 | 70.8kgW. P. Mullins, Ireland **B. Hayes**
French bumper. Fair form in 3 juvenile hurdles at Punchestown for new yard, best effort when second of 15 last time. Open to further progress in handicaps.**RESERVES****23 MUNSIF (IRE) (31) 95**
353 4 11-2 | 70.8kgCharles Byrnes, Ireland **Reserve**
Useful winner on Flat for Roger Varian and has shaped well in defeat in juvenile hurdles for new connections this winter. Almost certainly more to come now handicapping for the first time in this sphere. RESERVE.**24 LORD (GER) (38) (D, BF) 93**
2111612 4 11-2 | 70.8kgDonald McCain **Reserve**
Won 3 juveniles for Olly Murphy at the end of the summer and bounced back from a low-key first run for Donald McCain when making all in a listed event at Aintree in December. Good second in similar race at Musselburgh since but he's given the handicapper plenty to go on. Cheekpieces go on. RESERVE.

22 DECLARED RUNNERS (2 RESERVES)

BETTING FORECAST:**6-1** Saratoga, **13-2** Winston Junior, **8-1** Manlaga, **12-1** Ammes, **14-1** Bibe Mus, **16-1** Mustang Du Breuil, **16-1** The Mighty Celt, **20-1** Glen To Glen, **22-1** Pourquoi Pas Papa, **22-1** Madness D'elle, **28-1** Klycot, **28-1** Harwa, **28-1** Bertutea, **33-1** Barbizon, **33-1** Dignam, **40-1** bar**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

Faye Bramley has already won a big handicap chase here this season and perhaps WINSTON JUNIOR can repeat the feat over hurdles for his emerging stable. Manlaga impressed when seeing off a couple of these in the Victor Ludorum and is second choice ahead of the same owner's Saratoga, who looks to have been laid out for this. Bibe Mus, whose 5 lb penalty for his win at Sandown on Saturday gets him into the race, and Ammes also make the shortlist. Munsif would merit respect if getting a run.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**1. WINSTON JUNIOR 2. MANLAGA 3. SARATOGA****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	Puturhandstogether 4-11-6	17-2	Joseph Patrick O'Brien	M. P. Walsh	22
2024	Lark In The Mornin 4-11-0	9-1	Joseph Patrick O'Brien	J. J. Slevin	22
2023	Jazzy Matty 4-10-9	18-1	Gordon Elliott	M. J. M. O'Sullivan (3)	21
2022	Brazil 4-11-9	10-1	Padraig Roche	M. P. Walsh	21
2021	Jeff Kidder 4-10-8	80-1	Noel Meade	Sean Flanagan	22

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

3.20**TRUSTMARQUE ULTIMA HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 5yo+ £150,000 3m1f (5030 Metres)**

RACE 4

GBI RACINGGoing: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Even**

1	IROKO (FR) (80) (C)	t		100
	2/2F424-21 8 12-0 76.2kg Oliver Greenall & Josh Guerriero Martin Pipe winner at the 2023 Cheltenham Festival and has developed into a very smart chaser, ending last season with fine fourth in Grand National at Aintree. All the better for return when winning 3-runner class 2 event at Ascot (21f), displaying his versatility down in trip. Major claims.		<i>Jonjo O'Neill Jr.</i>	
2	HANDSTANDS (IRE) (51)	s		98
	F111P-243 7 11-12 75.3kg Ben Pauling Developed into a smart performer over fences last term, winning all 3 completed starts, including Grade 1 Scilly Isles at Sandown. Has been found wanting in the latter stages to varying degrees on all 3 starts this term but must be respected running in a handicap for the first time. Headgear on.		<i>Ben Jones</i>	
3	RESPLENDENT GREY (IRE) (51)	b		97
	22441-102 8 11-10 74.4kg Olly Murphy Ended last season with a win in bet365 Gold Cup at Sandown and backed that up when beating Handstands in Carlisle listed race on return. On back foot throughout in Coral Cup at Newbury but back on track when second in Fleur De Lys Chase at Windsor. Return to further will suit. Change of headgear.		<i>Sean Bowen</i>	
4	JAGWAR (FR) (45) (C, BF)	t		99
	5/11311-32 7 11-9 73.9kg Oliver Greenall & Josh Guerriero Improved at a rate of knots switched to fences last season, winning 4 from 5, notably the Plate at this meeting on final start. Excellent placed efforts in Premier Handicaps here both outings this term and this longer trip may place less pressure on his slightly flawed jumping technique.		<i>M. P. Walsh</i>	
5	BLAZE THE WAY (IRE) (44) (C, D)			95
	48-562415 8 11-3 71.2kg Ms Margaret Mullins, Ireland No mug over hurdles but chasing has transformed him no end and produced a career best when winning the Turners here (26.3f, good) in December, suited by the increase in trip. Disappointed in graded company next time but no surprise if he bounced back.		<i>D. E. Mullins</i>	
6	LEAVE OF ABSENCE (FR) (31) (CD)			97
	221-1P23 9 11-3 71.2kg Anthony Honeyball Progressive sort who won C&D novice on return. Better form in defeat last 2 starts, just denied in Silver Cup at Ascot before third of 4 in Grade 2 at Newbury.		<i>Rex Dingle</i>	
7	JOHNNYWHO (IRE) (52) (BF)	s+t		97
	33325-535 9 11-3 71.2kg Jonjo & A.J. O'Neill Without a win since chasing debut but was only narrowly denied in the Kim Muir at this meeting last year and went close again in Silver Cup at Ascot in December. Bit disappointing in Peter Marsh at Haydock since, however, and headgear now applied.		<i>Richie McLernon</i>	
8	KONFUSION (52) (BF)			97
	312-1U113 8 11-2 70.8kg Joel Parkinson & Sue Smith Has taken his form to another level this season, winning first 3 completed starts, impressing with his jumping when making all in Rowland Meyrick at Wetherby on Boxing Day. Good third off revised mark in Peter Marsh at Haydock next time but more needed again if he's to resume winning ways.		<i>Callum Bewley</i>	
9	SEARCH FOR GLORY (IRE) (47)	b+t		97
	3070-022P 9 11-2 70.8kg Gordon Elliott, Ireland Didn't go on after being placed at Grade 1 level as a novice last season but has rediscovered his form in valuable handicaps this season, runner-up in the Foxrock at Navan and Paddy Power Chase at Leopardstown. However, ran poorly at Gowran since and jumping went to pieces in this last year.		<i>James Smith (5lb/2kg)</i>	

10	STOLEN SILVER (FR) (10) (C)	t		95
	19/P64-0P3 11 11-2 70.8kg Georgina Nicholls Very smart chaser at his best but lost his way for Sam Thomas last season and well beaten all 3 outings for this stable.		<i>Miss Olive Nicholls (5lb/2kg)</i>	
11	IMPERIAL SAINT (FR) (52)			97
	71342-561 8 11-1 70.3kg Philip Hobbs & Johnson White Won 3 times over fences at Aintree last term and back to best when narrow winner of Peter Marsh at Haydock under this rider, landing a gamble on just his second start at 3m+. Had nothing to spare that day, however, and this tougher.		<i>Callum Pritchard (3lb/1kg)</i>	
12	BLOW YOUR WAD (IRE) (10)	s+t		99
	15/55-3732 8 11-1 70.3kg Gary & Josh Moore Won Grade 2 novice chase at Kempton in 2023/24. Lightly raced since but has made a positive start for this yard, third of 6 in Betfair Ascot Chase before narrow second back in a handicap at Newbury (Greatwood Gold Cup). Worth a try over this longer trip and can outrun his odds.		<i>Freddie Mitchell (3lb/1kg)</i>	
13	HYLAND (FR) (80) (CD)	s		98
	1122P-974 9 11-0 69.9kg Nicky Henderson Enjoyed a fine campaign over fences last term, 2 of his 3 wins coming over C&D. Back to something like that sort of form when fourth in Silver Cup at Ascot in December, likely to have gone close but for a bad mistake 2 out. Not taken lightly off the same mark with headgear applied.		<i>Nico de Boinville</i>	
14	MYRETOWN (IRE) (24) (CD, BF)			97
	51F11-F4P 9 10-13 69.4kg Lucinda Russell & Michael Scudamore Looked a smart prospect when a runaway winner of this 12 months ago (off 15 lb lower). Prone to the odd mistake, though, and that held him back first 2 starts this term. Stopped quickly trying a marathon trip at Haydock latest but better expected now.		<i>Derek Fox</i>	
15	THE DOYEN CHIEF (IRE) (17)			96
	211-2P512 9 10-13 69.4kg Alan King Strong-travelling sort who has barely had an off-day in his chasing career so far and found only a lightly-raced type with graded-winning form from his hurdling days too strong at Kempton 17 days ago.		<i>Tom Bellamy</i>	
16	QUEBECOIS (FR) (21) (BF)	t		98
	2321-2422 7 10-10 68.0kg Paul Nicholls Improved when making a winning handicap hurdle debut at Ayr final start last season. Easily best effort over fences this term second in Timeform Novices' Handicap here in January. Unsited by drop in distance at Newbury since and remains with potential back in a handicap/over a more suitable trip.		<i>Harry Cobden</i>	
17	THE SHORT GO (IRE) (88) (BF)	h+t		96
	342U5-P43 9 10-9 67.6kg Henry de Bromhead, Ireland Winless since making a successful debut in this sphere in Clonmel novice but has a good record at Cheltenham, making the frame here both starts this season and was also a creditable fifth in this last year off 6 lb lower. Others look better treated, however.		<i>D. J. O'Keefe</i>	
18	PATTER MERCHANT (IRE) (23)	s		98
	495-32530 7 10-5 65.8kg Gordon Elliott, Ireland Useful hurdler but has only a maiden win to his name (ninth in the last year's Pertemps Final here). Decent start over fences in the autumn but form has dipped since, well held tried in this headgear in listed handicap at Punchestown latest.		<i>J. W. Kennedy</i>	
19	FILANDERER (53)			96
	5/U111-151 10 10-2(9-13) 64.4kg (63.0kg) Hughie Morrison Continued his progression from last season when landing a 4-timer by a wide margin at Ffos Las on return. Undone by jumping at Newbury next time but resumed winning ways with another stylish win at Market Rasen. Likely to find this too competitive from 3 lb out of the weights, though.		<i>Jonathan Burke</i>	
20	KNIGHT OF ALLEN (FR) (31)			97
	3331-2142 6 10-2(9-12) 64.4kg (62.6kg) Mrs Jane Williams Has taken to fences very well this season, building on debut when winning Newbury handicap. Similar form in defeat since, unlucky to bump into one so vastly improved at back at Newbury last time. However, looks up against it here from 4 lb out of the handicap.		<i>Ciaran Gethings</i>	

3.20**TRUSTMARQUE ULTIMA HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 5yo+ £150,000 3m1f (5030 Metres)**

RACE 4

**21 MARGARET'S LEGACY (FR) (53) 94**

412/11-246 9 10-2(9-11) | 64.4kg (62.1kg)



Warren Greatrex

Harry Bannister

Positive start for this yard last term, bagging handicap chases at Southwell and Haydock (both at around 2½m). Good start to this campaign when runner-up at Bangor but not in form either start since. Has it all to do from 5 lb out of the handicap.

22 EYED (52) 91

11224-275 9 10-2(9-7) | 64.4kg (60.3kg)



Hughie Morrison

Sam Twiston-Davies

Much improved over fences for this yard last season, winning 3 times. However, form has levelled off since and out of his depth here (9 lb out of the handicap).

22 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

9-2 Jagwar, **7-1** Iroko, **11-1** Handstands, **12-1** Myretown, **14-1** Hyland, **14-1** Quebecois, **14-1** Johnnywho, **20-1** The Short Go, **22-1** Blaze The Way, **25-1** Konfusion, **28-1** Resplendent Grey, **33-1** Blow Your Wad, **33-1** Knight of Allen, **33-1** Leave of Absence, **40-1** bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:

One of the few races Britain has dominated, and they appear to hold the aces once again with the Greenall & Guerriero stable holding a strong hand with IROKO and Jagwar, the former shading the vote at the forecast odds. Things haven't gone to plan for Myretown this season but he still makes the shortlist with last year's romp still fresh in the memory, while Blaze The Way looks the pick of the Irish.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**1. IROKO 2. JAGWAR 3. MYRETOWN****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	Myretown 8-10-3	13-2f	Lucinda Russell	Patrick Wadge	24
2024	Chianti Classico 7-11-4	6-1	Kim Bailey	David Bass	21
2023	Corach Rambler 9-11-5	6-1jf	Lucinda Russell	Derek Fox	23
2022	Corach Rambler 8-10-2	10-1	Lucinda Russell	Derek Fox	24
2021	Vintage Clouds 11-10-11	28-1	Sue Smith	Ryan Mania	16

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

4.00**UNIBET CHAMPION HURDLE CHALLENGE TROPHY (Grade 1)**
(1) 4yo+ £465,750 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 5

Going: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Strong**

1 ALEXEI (GER) (24) (CD) t **93**
148-21131 **6** 11-10 | 74.4kg



Joe Tizzard

Brendan Powell

Has come back a bigger force this season, bagging valuable Greatwood here in November and shaped well when finishing third in another premier handicap back at Ascot. Didn't need to improve to land the odds in Grade 2 Kingwell Hurdle latest but this asks a totally different question.

2 ANZADAM (FR) (37) (D) h+t **93**
11/11-244 **6** 11-10 | 74.4kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

Mr P. W. Mullins

Extended unbeaten record to 4 in Grade 3 at Naas in January 2025 but has gone from an exciting, unknown quantity to looking a hard ride and not quite at Grade 1 company this season, dropped out and never really a threat in the Irish Champion Hurdle. Tongue tie reinstated.

3 PONIROS (37) (CD) **91**
1-23 **5** 11-10 | 74.4kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

D. E. Mullins

Useful on Flat and caused the biggest shock in the history of the Triumph Hurdle when running out a 100/1 winner on debut in this sphere a year ago. Proved that was no fluke when second in Grade 1 at Punchestown and shaped as though he'd come on for run behind the very smart mares at Leopardstown.

4 THE NEW LION (45) (CD) **98**
1/1111-F1 **7** 11-10 | 74.4kg



Dan Skelton

Harry Skelton

Unbeaten in 4 starts as a novice and particularly impressive in Baring Bingham a year ago. Still finding in front when falling heavily 2 out in Fighting Fifth on reappearance and was ultimately presented with a straightforward task in the International on Trials Day. The one open to improvement.

5 TUTTI QUANTI (FR) (31) (D) **92**
2/1261-611 **6** 11-10 | 74.4kg



Paul Nicholls

Harry Cobden

Disappointing in Welsh Champion on Chepstow reappearance but back to form with a bang to win Gerry Feilden at Newbury month later and confirmed he's a young hurdler on the up when supplementing that over the same C&D last month. Slick jumper but he's pitched in deep.

6 WORKAHEAD (IRE) (24) (D) **86**
310-42 **8** 11-10 | 74.4kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

D. J. O'Keefe

Has just a maiden hurdle win to his name (albeit beat a smart one) but all the better for reappearance when second in Grade 3 at Gowran last month. Hard to make a case for him in this company, though.

7 BRIGHTERDAYSAHEAD (FR) (37) (D) **99**
1/1114-321 **7** 11-3 | 71.2kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland

J. W. Kennedy

Very smart mare who got her career back on track in no uncertain terms this winter, runner-up in quest to follow up in the December Hurdle and cashed in on a below-par Lossiemouth for third Grade 1 in open company in the Irish Champion. Beaten both Cheltenham starts but a major player.

8 GOLDEN ACE (74) (CD) **94**
4311-2212 **8** 11-3 | 71.2kg



Jeremy Scott

Lorcan Williams

Really likeable mare who scaled new heights when landing this a year ago, albeit held until State Man fell at the last. Her reappearance win in the Fighting Fifth was also aided by a couple of high-profile fallers but ran right up to form when second to Sir Gino in the Christmas Hurdle.

9 LOSSIEMOUTH (FR) (37) (CD, BF) s **100**
12F11-112 **7** 11-3 | 71.2kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

P. Townend

Prolific hurdler, winning 14 of 16 completed starts including 9 at the highest level. Smooth winner of the Mares' Hurdle for a second time a year ago and while Brighterdaysahead lowered her colours at Leopardstown, she's fancied to reverse the form this time with cheekpieces likely to help.

BETTING FORECAST:

9-4 Lossiemouth, **5-2** The New Lion, **5-1** Brighterdaysahead, **10-1** Golden Ace, **16-1** Poniros, **25-1** Alexei, **25-1** Tutti Quanti, **33-1** Anzadam, **100-1** bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:

Several high-profile absentees potentially leaves the door ajar for another mare to add their name to the Champion Hurdle roll of honour. LOSSIEMOUTH looks the type to benefit from cheekpieces so is marginally preferred to Brighterdaysahead in her quest for a Cheltenham Festival 4-timer. The Elliott-trained mare has yet to win at this venue but she did beat the selection at Leopardstown and demands respect, while The New Lion's ceiling has yet to be ascertained.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. LOSSIEMOUTH 2. BRIGHTERDAYSAHEAD 3. THE NEW LION

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

2025	Golden Ace 7-11-3	25-1	Jeremy Scott	Lorcan Williams	7
2024	State Man 7-11-10	2-5f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	8
2023	Constitution Hill 6-11-10	4-11f	Nicky Henderson	Nico de Boinville	7
2022	Honeysuckle 8-11-3	8-11f	Henry de Bromhead	Rachael Blackmore	10
2021	Honeysuckle 7-11-3	11-10f	Henry de Bromhead	Rachael Blackmore	10

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

4.40

SUN RACING PLATE HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP)
(1) 5yo+ £150,000 2½m44y (4060 Metres)

RACE 6

GBI RACINGGoing: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Strong****1 DEE CAPO (FR) (37)** **96**

4F140-1U4 7 12-0 | 76.2kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland

Danny Gilligan

Returned an improved model this season, successful at Punchestown (21.3f) in November. Unseated next start but produced his best effort yet when fourth in Grade 3 handicap at Leopardstown (21.5f) 37 days ago. Career-high mark demands more but he's a definite each-way player.

2 DOWN MEMORY LANE (IRE) (94) (D) **96**

13/1324-01 8 11-12 | 75.3kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland

J. W. Kennedy

Smart chaser who is lightly raced for his age and he got firmly back on the up following a 4-month break when landing Foxrock Handicap at Navan (20.7f) in December, jumping better than can often be the case. Record fresh an obvious plus and a player if keeping the errors at bay.

3 NO QUESTIONS ASKED (IRE) (53) **96**

1210-1231 8 11-9 | 73.9kg



Ben Pauling

Ben Jones

Pretty useful 3-time novice hurdle winner who has made a bright start in this sphere, finding a good test at the trip playing to his strengths when doubling his tally in 3-runner Grade 2 at Windsor (16.2f) in January. Return to further will hold no fears and stable took this in 2024.

4 JUNGLE BOOGIE (IRE) (52) (D) **88**

416/1P-7P 12 11-8 | 73.5kg



Venetia Williams

Charlie Deutsch

Fragile but one time highly-talented performer who was sixth in 2024 Gold Cup on just his fourth start over fences. However, very lightly raced since and he hasn't looked anything like the same force in 2 outings for present yard since the turn of the year. Up against it.

5 BOOMBAWN (IRE) (17) (D) **96**

245-44380 9 11-7 | 73.0kg



Dan Skelton

Tristan Durrell

Grade 2 novice winner during a busy 2024/25 and produced best effort of present campaign when third in Silviniaco Conti Chase at Kempton in January. However, his mark has looked a stumbling block in handicaps here/at Kempton since and yard hold stronger claims with Madara.

6 DOWNMEXICOWAY (IRE) (36) **96**

17-P01213 7 11-5 | 72.1kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

D. J. O'Keefe

Hurdles winner who produced a decidedly useful effort when doubling his chase tally on handicap debut at Gowran (2m) in November. Found Irish Arkle too competitive at Leopardstown in February but this return to handicaps firmly in his favour back up in trip.

7 O'MOORE PARK (IRE) (37) (D) **95**

4320-2050 9 11-1 | 70.3kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

S. F. O'Keefe

Yet to taste success over fences but plenty of good efforts to his name, including when third in Grade 2 handicap at last season's Festival before runner-up in Silver Trophy back here. Had been running creditably prior to a below par display at Leopardstown 37 days ago and type to bounce back.

8 GUARD YOUR DREAMS (31) (C, D) **96**

43474F-21 10 11-1 | 70.3kg



Nigel & Willy Twiston-Davies

Sam Twiston-Davies

Smart hurdler at his best who enhanced his good record fresh when readily landing 7-runner veterans handicap chase at Warwick 31 days ago, jumping more fluently than usual. Still, an 8 lb rise likely enough to prevent him following up in this more demanding affair.

9 MADARA (FR) (36) (C) **100**

119/842-52 7 11-0 | 69.9kg



Dan Skelton

Harry Skelton

A dual winner for Sophie Leech in 2023/24 who shaped well in Paddy Power/December Gold Cup here in 2024. Seen only twice since but very much caught the eye when second at Kempton 5 weeks ago and top stable likely had this on his radar for some time. Very interesting in refitted cheekpieces.

10 BOOSTER BOB (IRE) (45) (D) **96**

P/1321-15 8 11-0 | 69.9kg



Olly Murphy

Sean Bowen

Signed off last season with success in Greatwood Gold Cup at Newbury in the spring and reappeared with a career-best victory in another valuable handicap chase there in November. Seemingly caught out from revised mark when fifth here in January and more needed.

11 PEAKY BOY (IRE) (17) (CD) **91**

11/133-F 8 10-13 | 69.4kg



Jonjo & A.J. O'Neill

Jonjo O'Neill Jr.

Progressive for Nicky Henderson during 2024, winning 3 of his 4 starts over hurdles/fences (all here). However, low-key start for new yard at Ascot last February and he got no further than the second after a breathing operation on last month's belated Newcastle reappearance. Cheekpieces go on now.

12 WILL THE WISE (IRE) (73) (BF) **96**

165-22140 7 10-13 | 69.4kg



Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland

Keith Donoghue

Good sixth in last season's Pertemps and raised his game further over fences this term, off the mark at Galway prior to a good fourth on handicap bow in the Troystown at Navan (3m) in November. Not disgraced at Leopardstown over Christmas and freshened up ahead of this. Tongue tie added.

13 RISKINTHEGROUND (IRE) (17) (CD) **96**

7-4196049 9 10-11 | 68.5kg



Dan Skelton

Charlie Todd

Came good last spring, supplementing his Ayr win in the Silver Trophy here from O'Moore Park in April. More miss than hit following his victory in intermediate chase at Newton Abbot in October but he's edged back down to last successful mark as a result.

14 MIDNIGHT IT IS (55) **86**

1/1383-097 10 10-9 | 67.6kg



Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland

Sean Flanagan

Successful on last season's reappearance at Navan (2m) and good placed efforts on 2 of 3 starts thereafter, notably when third in Grand Annual 12 months ago. Has not fired in 3 subsequent runs though, again well below best at Fairyhouse 55 days ago.

15 ZURICH (FR) (87) (CD) **95**

1/4530-113 7 10-8 | 67.1kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

B. Hayes

Hurdles winner in France who put fitness/experience to good use when doubling his chase tally from 9 lb lower mark over C&D in October. Backed that up when keeping on for third at Doncaster (19.1f) in December and demands of this race promise to see him to even better effect. Very interesting.

16 JIPCOT (FR) (24) (D, BF) **96**

1340P-314 7 10-7 | 66.7kg



Jonjo & A.J. O'Neill

Kielan Woods

Responded favourably to a positive ride with a recent run under his belt when opening chase account at Leicester (22.7f) in January and acquitted himself well (jumped fluently) back up in grade when fourth at Ascot (3m) since, just doing too much too soon. Each-way possibilities.

17 MCLAUREY (IRE) (49) **97**

3110-4374 7 10-7 | 66.7kg



Emmet Mullins, Ireland

M. P. Walsh

Progressive over hurdles last term and plenty of promise to glean from 3 of his 4 starts over fences this season, catching the eye when fourth in novice at Down Royal 7 weeks ago. Remains with plenty of potential returned to handicaps for stable who bagged this with The Shunter in 2021.

18 THEATRE NATIVE (IRE) (74) (CD) **96**

3221-0396 8 10-7 | 66.7kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

M. P. O'Connor

Went the right way over fences during 2024/25, building on good placed efforts when taking 7-runner mares novice handicap here last April. Down the field in Paddy Power Gold Cup in November and didn't see her race out at Leopardstown (17f) over Christmas. Others look stronger.

19 WESTERN ZEPHYR (IRE) (24) **95**

4P/1230P-2 9 10-6 | 66.2kg



Mickey Bowen

Shane Fenelon (51b/2kg)

Resumed in good heart last season, winning well at Carlisle before second in the Arkle Trial here. Run of good form came to a halt after but enhanced good record fresh on debut for new yard when second in first-time cheekpieces at Haydock 24 days ago. Needs to back that up.

20 GRANDEUR D'AME (FR) (31) **93**

520P-F03P 10 10-5 | 65.8kg



Alan King

Tom Bellamy

Useful chaser who isn't always the most fluent but he took step back in right direction when third in a Premier Handicap here (20.6f) on New Year's Day. Seemingly amiss when pulled up in race won by Guard Your Dreams at Warwick last month but percentage call to look elsewhere in any case.

4.40**SUN RACING PLATE HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP)
(1) 5yo+ £150,000 2½m44y (4060 Metres)**

RACE 6

**21** **EMBITTERED (IRE) (4)** (D) **85**
10719P27 **12** 10-4 | 65.3kg b+t

Syd Hosie

Paddy Hanlon (5lb/2kg)

Won a claiming hurdle and handicap chase in Ireland for Eric McNamara last summer but finished well held on his stable debut in veterans' handicap chase at Exeter (19.2f) 4 days ago and he looks firmly up against it back up markedly in class. Blinkers replace usual cheekpieces.

22 **MOON D'ORANGE (FR) (8)** (CD) **92**
72005670 **8** 10-2(9-13) | 64.4kg (63.0kg) v

John McConnell, Ireland

Callum Pritchard (3lb/1kg)

Fairly useful hurdler/chaser who was well served by run of the race when landing a good handicap here (20.6f) in January 2025. Proved more miss than hit over both sets of obstacles since though and work to do from out of the weights in new headgear.

23 **YES INDEED (FR) (36)** **92**
8/4P11-P34 **9** 10-2(9-11) | 64.4kg (62.1kg)

Martin Keighley

Freddie Keighley (5lb/2kg)

Won pair of handicap chases around 2m on joining Martin Keighley last spring. Lightly raced and easily his best effort since following a breathing operation when fourth at Kempton 5 weeks ago but another who looks to have plenty on his plate in this much more demanding contest.

23 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

9-2 Madara, **5-1** Mclaurey, **10-1** Will The Wise, **14-1** Down Memory Lane, **14-1** Zurich, **16-1** No Questions Asked, **16-1** Downmexicoway, **18-1** O'moore Park, **20-1** Booster Bob, **22-1** Jipcot, **28-1** Dee Capo, **28-1** Guard Your Dreams, **33-1** Peaky Boy, **40-1** bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:

Having shaped well in the Paddy Power and December Gold Cup here upon joining Dan Skelton in 2024, MADARA arrives on the back of a very eye-catching second at Kempton 5 weeks ago and this will have been on his radar for some time. With refitted cheekpieces likely to put an extra edge on him he looks very interesting. Mclaurey has fewer miles on the clock than the selection and is feared for the stable who won this in 2021. Zurich and Will The Wise are just a couple of the others to consider.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**1. MADARA 2. MCLAUREY 3. ZURICH****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	Jagwar 6-10-10	3-1f	Oliver Greenall & Josh Guerriero	Jonjo O'Neill Jr.	20
2024	Shakem Up'arry 10-11-5	8-1	Ben Pauling	Ben Jones	21
2023	Seddon 10-11-0	20-1	John McConnell	B. W. Harvey (5)	23
2022	Coole Cody 11-11-2	22-1	Evan Williams	Adam Wedge	15
2021	The Shunter 8-10-12	9-4f	Emmet Mullins	Jordan Colin Gainford (7)	21

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

5.20

RACE 7

NATIONAL HUNT CHALLENGE CUP NOVICES' HANDICAP CHASE (2) 5yo+ (Rated 0-145) £100,000 3m5f201y (6020 Metres)



Going: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Even**

- 1 WADE OUT (IRE) (51) (C)** **94**
 21616-114 **7** 12-0 | 76.2kg s
Oilly Murphy *Sean Bowen*
 Bagged 3 novice hurdles last season and improved for the switch to this sphere when landing Worcester maiden and listed event at Cheltenham before Christmas. Posted a solid fourth in Grade 2 event at Windsor (3m) last time and not ruled out going up in trip now handicapping with cheekpieces tried.
- 2 PIC ROC (IRE) (38)** **96**
 0P6-U1591 **8** 11-11 | 74.8kg s
Ben Pauling *Ben Jones*
 Finally opened his chase account at Huntingdon in November and got back on the up when easily adding to it in 3m Sandown handicap in January. Needs to take another step forward hiked up 7 lb however.
- 3 KING OF ANSWERS (IRE) (25)** **95**
 14P2-5141 **7** 11-10 | 74.4kg s
Lucinda Russell & Michael Scudamore *Derek Fox*
 Upwardly-mobile young chaser who was fitted with cheekpieces for the first time when making all in 23f handicap chase at Kelso 25 days ago. Has more to offer as he bids to go 3-5 in this sphere. In the mix.
- 4 ONE BIG BANG (IRE) (46) (BF)** **95**
 4615-3213 **8** 11-9 | 73.9kg s
James Owen *Alex Chadwick (3lb/1kg)*
 Useful 3m winner over hurdles and has shown form at least as good over fences, easily taking 3m Southwell maiden in December before finding trip on the sharp side when third in 2m3f Doncaster novice following month. In very good hands so he's no forlorn hope now tackling a marathon trip.
- 5 KURASSO BLUE (FR) (60) (BF)** **96**
 151-212 **5** 11-8 | 73.5kg s
Gordon Elliott, Ireland *J. W. Kennedy*
 Ex-French recruit who went 2-3 over hurdles. Has made a very bright start over fences, landing maiden at Punchestown (23f) in December before taking another step forward when second in 3m novice chase at Naas following month. Has potential for more now stepping up in trip for his handicap debut.
- 6 WILL DO (IRE) (47)** **94**
 230-7020P **9** 11-7 | 73.0kg b
Gordon Elliott, Ireland *Danny Gilligan*
 Remains winless over fences and he added to a patchy record when pulled up in Thyestes Chase (3m1f) at Gowran in January. Third in this last year however, so not one to totally dismiss if back on his A-game.
- 7 GUARD THE MOON (53)** **96**
 228PF-1P1 **8** 11-7 | 73.0kg s
Nigel & Willy Twiston-Davies *Sam Twiston-Davies*
 Improved when successful on his chasing debut at Aintree in December. Pulled up after an early error at Newbury but quickly bounced back in first-time cheekpieces when landing 3m Windsor handicap in January, ridden more patiently than usual. Firmly in the picture with this step up in trip a plus.
- 8 GRAND GESTE (IRE) (24)** **95**
 34P-221P1 **7** 11-5 | 72.1kg s
Joel Parkinson & Sue Smith *Danny McMenamin*
 Has proven a different proposition switched to fences this season, landing Grand National Trial at Haydock last month having earlier taken the Tommy Whittle there. This likeable sound-jumping front-runner must enter calculations with his stamina proven.
- 9 BACKMERSACKME (IRE) (37)** **96**
 846-78201 **7** 11-5 | 72.1kg t
Emmet Mullins, Ireland *Donagh Meyler*
 Excellent second in 3m1f handicap here in October and (tongue tied) gained a deserved first chasing success in valuable 23-runner handicap at Leopardstown (2m5f) last month. Remains unexposed over staying distances and a likely player for his shrewd yard that took this in 2024.

- 10 HOLLOWAY QUEEN (IRE) (31)** **97**
 114P-PU41 **6** 11-4 | 71.7kg s
Nicky Henderson *James Bowen*
 Looked a good prospect when going 2-2 over hurdles last term. Got back on the up when gaining her first victory since in 23f Newbury handicap chase last month, jumping well and quickening clear from 2 out. Hiked up 10 lb but she can make her presence felt.
- 11 ICEBERG THEORY (IRE) (107)** **99**
 1/636P2-11 **7** 11-3 | 71.2kg s
Paul Nolan, Ireland *C. Stone-Walsh (3lb/1kg)*
 A useful winning hurdler who has made a very promising start over fences, landing maiden at Limerick (2m7f) in May before returning from 6 months off with an emphatic win in 2m5f Cork handicap in November. This son of Flemensfirth has more to offer over staying trips. Most interesting.
- 12 NEWTON TORNADO (FR) (45)** **100**
 2221-F1P1 **7** 11-3 | 71.2kg s
Rebecca Curtis *Sean Flanagan*
 Ended last season on up over hurdles and it's been a similar story over fences, making it 2 out of 2 completed starts in emphatic fashion in 3m Doncaster novice handicap in January. This sound jumper could have more to offer stepping up in trip and rates a big player for last year's winning yard.
- 13 FIRST CONFESSION (IRE) (35)** **95**
 71P-335F1 **7** 11-3 | 71.2kg s
Joe Tizzard *Brendan Powell*
 Point/hurdles winner who has advanced his form in this sphere this term, getting off the mark at the fifth attempt in 2m5f maiden at Carlisle last month. This demands plenty more but he remains capable of better.
- 14 UNION STATION (IRE) (54)** **94**
 4226-2P2U **7** 11-1 | 70.3kg s
Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland *Keith Donoghue*
 Fairly useful maiden hurdler/chaser who posted his best effort when second of 13 in 3m handicap chase at Leopardstown in December. Raced too freely in cheekpieces and well held when unseated rider last at Fairyhouse (2m) since. Has work to do.
- 15 WALKING ON AIR (IRE) (45)** **95**
 P63F0P-83 **9** 10-11 | 68.5kg s+t
Faye Bramley *Harry Cobden*
 Formerly very useful hurdler/chaser for Gary Brown. Easily best run for his new yard in first-time cheekpieces (tongue strap also refitted) when third of 8 in Great Yorkshire at Doncaster (3m) in January. Not dismissed if building on that over this longer distance.
- 16 SILVER THORN (31)** **97**
 532P-5114 **7** 10-8 | 67.1kg s
Emma Lavelle *Jonathan Burke*
 A fairly useful winner over hurdles and he advanced his form when making all in 3m handicap chases at Doncaster and Exeter either side of Christmas. Not so good when fourth to Holloway Queen at Newbury last time and needs to bounce back.
- 17 HOLOKEA (IRE) (24)** **96**
 22-21222P **7** 10-8 | 67.1kg s
Mickey Bowen *Shane Fenelon (5lb/2kg)*
 Got off the mark over fences at Ffos Las (3m1f) in October and ran well in finishing runner-up next 3 starts. Pulled up in Haydock's Grand National Trial last time but he's proven at the trip and is the sort to bounce back quickly.

17 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

11-2 Backmersackme, **7-1** Newton Tornado, **17-2** Iceberg Theory, **10-1** Wade Out, **11-1** Kurasso Blue, **16-1** Holloway Queen, **16-1** One Big Bang, **18-1** King of Answers, **18-1** Grand Geste, **18-1** Walking On Air, **20-1** Pic Roc, **20-1** Guard The Moon, **28-1** First Confession, **33-1** Will Do, **40-1** bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:

ICEBERG THEORY is taken to emerge on top in a fascinating finale with this marathon trip likely to play very much to the strengths of this son of Flemensfirth. Paul Nolan's 7-y-o hasn't been out since coming home very strongly to score over 2m5f at Cork in November and can improve again. Emmet Mullins' Leopardstown winner Backmersackme rates a big threat and the lightly-raced Kurasso Blue could bring up a 1-2-3 for Ireland. Newton Tornado rates the pick of the home runners.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. ICEBERG THEORY 2. BACKMERSACKME 3. KURASSO BLUE

5.20

RACE 7

**NATIONAL HUNT CHALLENGE CUP NOVICES' HANDICAP
CHASE (2) 5yo+ (Rated 0-145) £100,000 3m5f201y
(6020 Metres)**


WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

2025	Haiti Couleurs	8-11-4	7-2jf	Rebecca Curtis	Ben Jones	18
2024	Corbetts Cross	7-11-7	15-8	Emmet Mullins	Mr D. O'Connor	7
2023	Gaillard du Mesnil	7-11-7	10-11f	W. P. Mullins	Mr P. W. Mullins	10
2022	Stattler	7-11-6	2-1	W. P. Mullins	Mr P. W. Mullins	6
2021	Galvin	7-11-6	7-2	Ian Ferguson	J. W. Kennedy	12

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race