

Cheltenham Festival Issue

The best racing advice in association with www.secretbettingclub.com

WELCOME

March 2009.

Hello and welcome to this extra special Cheltenham Festival Issue produced by the Secret Betting Club. Through our contacts in the betting world we have drawn together some of the finest racing minds to get the lowdown on the best betting advice, in order to give you the edge on the bookmaker.

Cheltenham is always a huge betting event with the bookmakers taking a huge number of bets on it each year. With the right expertise, Cheltenham week could well turn out to be one of the most lucrative periods of your betting calendar.

Each expert listed in this issue has a proven history of making a profit betting on horse racing and we have no doubt that as you read the detailed analysis you will get a real insight into the workings of a betting professional. No stone has been left unturned in the quest to take advantage of what should be one of the biggest tournaments for betting turnover ever seen.

Take your time to read the thoughts of each expert and follow them in on a number of their advised bets should you so wish. Each of the experts listed will also be supplying their own unique advice as the festival progresses, so be sure to check out each service for details on how to pick up more of their advice.

If you enjoy this free issue, be sure to visit us at the Secret Betting Club to let us know your thoughts, as we would love to hear from you.

Here is to a profitable Cheltenham!

Mike Bishop & Dan Jones
Co-editors

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SECRET BETTING CLUB: ABOUT US

The Secret Betting Club is a private member services dedicated to illustrating exactly how to make money betting. We do this by researching and monitoring different advisory services and recommending who to follow to do exactly this. Equally, we also report on those tipster services that we feel you should avoid and in doing so can save you money.

We have been in operation since May 2006 and have produced over 25 issues of our renowned monthly reports, which contain all the information you need to get started on the quest to make money betting.

We ourselves are professional gamblers who put our own money on the line in our quest to make regular profits from sports. We do this by following the exact methods that we share with all members.

By joining the Secret Betting Club, you will automatically have an edge over thousands of punters still scratching around for consistent profits.

Don't delay, join today by visiting www.secretbettingclub.com

Mike Bishop & Dan Jones
Editors - Secret Betting Club.

FREE: SAMPLE EDITION

If you would like to see a sample edition of our work at the Secret Betting Club and get a flavour of what exactly it is that we do, you can now pick up a free sample edition.

Simply visit www.secretbettingclub.com and enter your email address at the top of the page where instructed. We will then forward on immediately an example of our work to you.

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We now list all our Secret Betting Club reviews in an A to Z format at our www.moneymakerreview.com website for all members to view. This means you can access hundreds of our past articles at the click of a button and get the informed opinion on any tipster service or system that comes across your path.

Membership of the Secret Betting Club brings total access to all the articles listed at Money Maker Review. You can sample some of these reviews by signing up to receive a cross-section of our [work for free by using this link](#).

Some of the most popular reviews and links at Money Maker Review are: [Blue Sky Racing](#), [Bob Rothman](#), [Dodgy Favourites](#), [False Favourites](#), [FP System](#), [Grey Horse Bot](#), [Isiris](#), [Pegasus Racing Club](#), [Steve Lewis Hamilton](#), [Tipping Legends](#), [Winabotatoo](#) & [Winners To Losers](#)

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Cheltenham 2009: THE EXPERTS

This Cheltenham 2009 special issue features contributions from seven different experts from the world of racing. Each expert has their own take on the festival, highlighting different trends and statistics to give you a thorough analysis of the week's events. Unlike other guides you might find in the papers, all these experts have proven track record of making money from horse racing!

Here's a quick summary of each expert and the content they have provided.

Page 8: AW Winners.

Start the festival with analysis of the very first race, the Supreme Novice Hurdle.

Page 11: The Form Analyst

Who to back and who to avoid in all the feature races.

Page 18: Tipping Legends

Day by day analysis of the festival's key trends.

Page 22: Racing Trends

Cheltenham trends from the renowned expert, David Renham.

Page 28: Big Mike Betting.

Big Mike's Cheltenham Lucky 15

Page 31: Herbie Fogg

Cheltenham Survival Guide and top tips.

Page 34: Nick Pullen

A 16/1 shot for the Ryanair chase.

Special membership offers:

Many of the featured experts in this issue are running special offers regarding their service's advice so it is well worth checking out the deals associated with each article. Each expert featured in this issue will also be providing more advice as the festival takes place, so be sure to take some time to investigate them further.

There are also a number of experts not featured in this issue who will also be providing advice of note during the Cheltenham festival. Many of them will be supplying advice or ratings on each individual day and they too have special offers of note as listed below:

Pro Form Racing

Special offer: 50% off.

Website address: <http://www.proformprofessional.com/>

Pro Form provide revolutionary interactive computerised race cards with interactive form ratings for every horse in every race. In the last couple of years, their top rated selections have out performed other more popular rating methods such as the Racing Post. Pro Form provide everything from speed ratings to running styles.

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Proform Racing are offering a 50% discount on any length of subscription to new customers if you sign up in time for Cheltenham 2009, just enter the campaign code CHEL50 when signing up.

Mathematician Racing

Special offer: Free Trial for the festival

Website address: <http://www.mathematician-betting.co.uk/offers/sbc/>

'Maths' as he is known to many, provides a unique statistical breakdown of the key races each day. The effort and detail he puts into each piece is astounding and serves him well with an unusually high rate of return from his account bets.

You can sample past analysis here: <http://www.mathematician-betting.co.uk/cheltenham-horse-racing-tip.asp>

He will also be putting one race analysis a day on the free blog at www.horse-betting-blog.co.uk. This will be time delayed after being sent to subscribers.

However, for the best sample of the Maths service, sign up for the free trial here: <http://www.mathematician-betting.co.uk/offers/sbc/>

Winning Racing Tips

Special offer: 28 Day Free Trial

Website address: <http://www.winningracingtips.co.uk/>

Winning Racing Tips tend to specialise in Each Way bets and have a long term proven track record. You can join today and get a free 28 day trial of all their advice, including any Cheltenham bets.

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Cheltenham 2009: THE RACECARD

Before we get into the expert analysis, a quick look at the festival itself and what we can expect over the 4 days of racing. Below is a snapshot and quick rundown of each day and the feature races to look out for.

Tuesday 10th March

Time	Race	Distance
1.30	williamhill.com Supreme Novices' Hurdle	2m 1/2f
2.05	Irish Independent Arkle Challenge Trophy Steeple Chase	2m
2.40	William Hill Trophy Handicap Steeple Chase	3m 1/2f
3.20	Smurfit Kappa Champion Hurdle Challenge Trophy	2m 1/2f
4.00	Glenfarclas Cross Country Handicap Steeple Chase	3m 7f
4.40	David Nicholson Mares' Hurdle Race	2m 4f

Wednesday 11th March

Time	Race	Distance
1.30	National Hunt Steeple Chase Challenge Cup	4m
2.05	Ballymore Properties Novices' Hurdle	2m 5f
2.40	RSA Steeple Chase	3m 1/2f
3.20	Seasons Holidays Queen Mother Champion Steeple Chase	2m
4.00	Coral Cup (Handicap Hurdle)	2m 5f
4.40	Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle	2m 1/2f
5.15	Weatherbys Champion Bumper (Open NH Flat Race)	2m 1/2f

Thursday 12th March

Time	Race	Distance
1.30	Jewson Novices' Handicap Steeple Chase	2m 5f
2.05	Pertemps Final (Handicap Hurdle)	3m
2.40	Ryanair Chase	2m 5f
3.20	Ladbrokes World Hurdle	3m
4.00	Freddie Williams Festival Plate Handicap Steeple Chase	2m 5f
4.40	Fulke Walwyn Kim Muir Challenge Cup Handicap Steeple Chase	3m 1 1/2f

Friday 13th March

Time	Race	Distance
1.30	JCB Triumph Hurdle	2m 1f
2.05	Vincent O'Brien County Handicap Hurdle	2m 1f
2.40	Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle	3m
3.20	totesport Cheltenham Gold Cup Steeple Chase	3m 2 1/2f
4.00	Christie's Foxhunter Steeple Chase	3m 2 1/2f
4.40	Martin Pipe Conditional Jockeys' Handicap Hurdle	2m 4 1/2f
5.15	Johnny Henderson Grand Annual Steeple Chase	2m 1/2f

Taken from the Cheltenham Festival website:

The feature race on Tuesday is The Smurfit Kappa Champion Hurdle, the most sought after prize anywhere for 2 miles hurdlers. The Irish have won seven of the last ten runnings of this historic contest, but Katchit led home a 1-2-3 for Britain in 2008.

Wednesday sees the Seasons Holidays Queen Mother Champion Chase take centre stage, as the best two mile chasers produce a fast and furious contest over the famous Cheltenham fences. For many, this is the most exciting race of the year and Master Minded produced one of the greatest performances of the modern era in 2008. In 2009,

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Wednesday will have seven races for the first time since The Festival became a four day meeting.

On Thursday, the long distance hurdlers contest The Ladbrokes World Hurdle. Only the brave and the strong prevail in this three mile contest. Inglis Drever made history by winning the race for the third time in 2008. The Ryanair Chase is another Grade 1 highlight on Thursday, which will once again be [Ladies Day](#).

Then comes Friday and the highlight of the entire Jump season: the totesport Cheltenham Gold Cup. This is the race that every owner trainer and jockey dreams of winning and it takes a very special horse to win more than once.

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AW WINNERS:

Start the festival with this analysis of the Supreme Novice Hurdle

Tipster: AW Winners

Website address: <http://www.awwinners.com/>

Cheltenham analysis summary:

- The first race in depth.
- Only back 5-6 year olds.
- Back Kempes.

The Tipster:

AWwinners.com is a service specialising in All Weather racing and specifically All Weather betting systems. We have undertaken extensive research into this area and as such can now employ a portfolio of proven AW systems that have proven to consistently beat the market year on year. We simply send you the selections of these systems each morning.

Using similar analysis that created the AW systems, AW winners have put together a Cheltenham special guide. The guide features in depth analysis and recommended bets for all 26 races at the festival. The guide will be emailed out each day. Total cost is just £12.99. The following article provides example analysis from the first race. You can download the guide from here:

http://www.awwinners.com/cheltenham_guide.html

1.30 Cheltenham - WilliamHill.com Supreme Novices Hurdle - Grade 1 - 4yo+ - 2m 110yrds

My first port of call in this race is to look for horses that are unbeaten over hurdles. Despite unbeaten hurdlers only making up between 10% and 20% of the field in recent years they have made up 54% of the winners of this race. However I don't think it pays to be too ruthless here and exceptions can be made for those horses who have tasted defeat once in forgivable circumstances. For example if you had applied the "unbeaten hurdlers only" rule to the letter in 2007 you would have missed out on a 40/1 winner in Ebaziyan who fit all other trends perfectly. His only defeat came by a short head 2nd on his hurdling debut in an absolute mud pit at Cork a couple of months earlier. It would have been very harsh to rule him out because of that defeat so a concession could be made and we were rewarded handsomely!

It is for this reason that while **Aachen**, **Kempes**, **Mikael D'Haguenet**, **Red Maloney** and **Torphichen** are the only true qualifiers to the rule, I'm also including **Cousin Vinny** and **Go Native** as rule qualifiers. Cousin Vinny would have won his race easily last time out had he not unseated his rider. He was all over the eventual winner Pandomara headed to that last flight and he almost certainly would have cruised away in the home straight had he stayed upright. Go Native's only defeat came to Hurricane Flyer who would have been a strong favourite in this race had he not been withdrawn through injury a couple of weeks ago. He matched him all the way but hit the last obstacle and Hurricane Flyer pulled away.

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So we are down to 7 straightaway and the next hatchet to the contenders is going to come via their age. I only want 5 and 6yo's on my side in this race. 30 of the last 34 runnings of this race have been won by a 5 or 6yo. It's a no-brainer really as 4yo's aren't physically mature enough to cope with the stamina test that is a top class Cheltenham race and 7yo+ horses are in general just too old for this type of race. An exception is 4yo's from France as they mature a lot quicker than British/Irish horses do and they are given jumping work a lot earlier than our horses usually are. They are pretty much at the same stage of their career as a British 5yo. Therefore, considering they get an 8lb weight allowance they should always be in your thinking. Mr Thriller and Ruthenoise are this year's French 4yo's but they don't pass the undefeated rule so I can't be having them.

The 5 or 6yo rule usually gets rid of a few but this year only eliminates **Torpichen** from our shortlist as he is a non-French bred 4yo.

That leaves us with 6 and I'm going to narrow that down to 5 by eliminating **Aachen** as he is not Irish trained. In recent years my personal opinion is that Irish novice hurdlers are in general significantly better than their British counterparts. That has shown up here as 6 of the last 8 winners have been Irish trained and they've filled all the place positions in a few of those races too. The fact that Aachen is unbeaten in British hurdle races isn't as significant as the other 5's Irish form so he gets the chop.

Of those 5 I'm also kicking out **Go Native** as his trainer Noel Meade has a poor record in general at the Festival. I read a theory the other week that this may be because he gets his horses ready earlier than most and as a result, his horses look more impressive earlier in the season. By the time it comes to Cheltenham everyone else is ready to and his horses don't look quite as good as they did. Whatever the reason don't think you can confidently follow his horses at the Festival until things start to change here for him.

So we've got 4 left - **Cousin Vinny**, **Kempes**, **Mikael D'Haguenet** and **Red Maloney**. All but Red Maloney are trained by Willie Mullins who has to have a big chance in this race. A shrewd move closer to the time may be to see if any bookmaker has odds on if Mullins will win this race. He looks a decent bet if the odds are big enough as he has 3 of the 4 trends horses.

There is one more eye-catching stat though that leaves us with just 1 horse left standing. 11 of the last 21 winners of this race were lightly raced over hurdles having run just once or twice over hurdles before. A 50% strikerate is good in any way you look at it but when you consider that this comes from a tiny representation, it looks even better. In 2008 Captain Cee Bee and Binocular were 2 of only 5 horses who had 1 or 2 hurdle runs to their name and they finished 1st and 2nd. In 2007 Ebaziyan was 1 of only 3 who had 1 or 2 hurdle runs and he won at 40/1. In 2006 there were only 3 horses who had 1 or 2 runs beforehand and they finished 2nd by a short head and 4th and 5th. That is a hugely impressive performance.

There is only 1 horse on our shortlist that has had 1 or 2 hurdle runs and that is **Kempes**. The rest have had 3 or 4. There is only 1 choice then for our pick for the Supreme Novices Hurdle and that has to be **Kempes**. He fits every trend and has good form in the book. He won well at Navan last time we saw him in January on heavy ground and he seemed like he won't mind the stamina test that is Cheltenham. He's currently around the 10/1 - 12/1 mark which considering the above looks a nice bit of value.

Recommended Advice

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Back Kempes

Keep your eyes out for a market on how Willie Mullins will do in this race.

You can download the guide from here:

http://www.awwinners.com/cheltenham_guide.html

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The Form Analyst: Who to back and who to avoid in all the feature races

Tipster: The Form Analyst

Website address: <http://theformanalyst.com/>

Cheltenham analysis summary:

- All the races divided into championship races, novice races & handicap races.
- Imperial for the Ryanair chase.
- Tazbar for the world hurdle.

The Tipster:

The Form Analyst service was launched in October 2008 and is gradually acquiring a reputation for quality horse-racing analysis. Returns so far have been reasonable rather than spectacular - but there is undoubted potential and a realistic expectation that these will increase significantly as Graeme's experience of the tipping game grows.

Graeme Dand is The Form Analyst and he has an in-depth knowledge of horse-racing that far outweighs his tender years. Graeme produces a daily report outlining betting opportunities. Historical copies of these reports are stored on his web site and provide an invaluable reference guide. Additionally, there is a forum on the website where Graeme fields many questions and queries from existing subscribers, on a daily basis.

Since the inception of the service in October, Graeme is showing a profit of 44 points at Cheltenham meetings with a strike rate of 59% (10 wins from 17 bets). His subscribers have been looking forward to Cheltenham and the month of March for a long-time, as it heralds his favourite race meeting and the start of the turf flat season, which is when Graeme hopes to make the majority of his yearly profits.

As a special bonus to SBC members and others receiving this preview of Cheltenham, Graeme is happy to provide the opportunity to subscribe to his service at a greatly discounted rate. By using the link below and entering the password 'newmarket', it is possible to buy 3 months subscription for the significantly reduced price of £100 (with other discounted options available). This offer is only available to readers of this preview and will be withdrawn at the end of the Cheltenham festival.

<http://theformanalyst.com/sbc/>

The Festival in detail.

The Cheltenham festival is the undoubted highlight of the National Hunt season. Many of the top jumpers will have their entire year geared around these 4 days at Prestbury Park. As a consequence, you can rest assured that when your selection faces the tapes, it is likely to be at its peak and running for its life.

As with all horse-racing, the most significant variable to affect the outcome of the races is the state of the ground. Unfortunately, it is impossible to be sure what this will be until the first few races have been run. However, we can make a few assumptions and the recommendations in this report are made with these in mind.

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Simon Claisse, clerk of the course at Cheltenham, is committed to ensuring that the festival starts on ground no quicker than the soft side of good. This means that, weather permitting, the ground on the first day, should be somewhere between Good/Soft and Soft. Of course, if there is a deluge of rain at any point between now and next Tuesday, then the prospect of heavy ground becomes possible. Though Cheltenham is such a fast draining course, this would only remain the case for a few days after the rain had stopped.

For the purposes of this report we will assume the ground will be 'Good/Soft, Soft in places' for all 4 days.

Races at the festival can be broken into 3 broad categories:

- Championship races
- Novice races
- Handicap races

Championship Races

The main races in this category provide the backbone to the festival, namely: The Champion Hurdle, The Queen Mother Champion Chase, The World Hurdle and The Gold Cup.

Additionally, there are 5 other championship events: The Champion Bumper; The Ryanair Chase, The Triumph Hurdle, The Foxhunters Chase and The David Nicholson Mares hurdle.

One thing that you should bear in mind for these races is that the main protagonists in these events are likely to have been targeted at their respective races for the entire season. In theory, these should be the easiest races to unpick as most of the runners are exposed and have been competing against each other throughout the course of the season.

Champion Hurdle

Binocular has been a very short priced favourite for the Champion hurdle since an impressive win at Ascot just before Christmas. He was the leading juvenile hurdler last year and two facile victories this year suggest that not only has he trained on, he has possibly improved as well.

However, prior to last year, no 5 year old had won the Champion Hurdle since 1985, when the great See You Then took the first of his 3 titles. Furthermore, it's not as if some very decent 5 year olds haven't tried. The issue is to do with maturity and whilst as a French bred, Binocular could be more mature than many 5 year olds, his ability to come up the hill in a Championship race, is still unproven.

In truth, his profile is very similar to that of Kribensis. He was the champion 4 year old hurdler in 1988 and unbeaten against his elders in 1989. However, the Champion proved a step too far and he finished unplaced behind Beech Road. Interestingly, Kribensis came back the following year and won the Champion hurdle and maybe this is a path that Binocular will follow.

The problem with not selecting Binocular, is who do you select? On form, there is very little between the other main protagonists and the result is likely to be dependant on the ground and how the race unfolds. On good ground, I would expect Snap Tie to run

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very well and he looks a good EW bet at 40/1. If the ground did become heavy, then Muirhead, an apparently forgotten horse, could run a huge race, again at 40/1.

In summary, a tricky race where you wouldn't want to back Binocular at the odds but you wouldn't necessarily want to lay him either. Some value can be had by looking for an each-way selection and depending on ground conditions, Muirhead or Snap Tie may be the call each-way but ground conditions will be critical to either horse's chances.

The Queen Mother Champion Chase

It is difficult, if not impossible, to look beyond Master Minded in this race. The horse looks completely different class to his opponents (in fact, to most horses in training!) and provided there is no major calamity, he should come home an easy winner.

The race for the runners-up spot however should be far more interesting and as most bookmakers have priced this up, this can effectively be treated as 'the race'.

The major contenders are Big Zeb, Well Chief, Petit Robin and Twist Magic - but each has a significant doubt in my opinion.

Big Zeb is not the most reliable of jumpers and indeed fell last time out. This isn't what you want at Cheltenham in a Championship event. Well Chief has almost enough raw ability to bustle up Master Minded - but he's now 10 years old, has been plagued with injury problems and hasn't run for 2 years. Petit Robin is the solid option but he's a rather small horse and I'm not convinced he will be suited to the fences at Cheltenham. Twist Magic is a bit of an enigma - he's capable of being very good - but he's also capable of being very poor and you can't back him with any confidence.

This is slightly speculative but I'm quite happy to take all 4 on with Briareus. The horse was quick enough to finish sixth in a Champion hurdle and this year has finished fourth in the King George (appearing not to stay the 3 miles). Although fragile, he is a seriously talented horse and if he turns up on the day, 8/1 without Master Minded in the race will look a great bet.

World Hurdle

If ever a festival race had got an obvious pre-race tricast, then this is the one. I can see it now: 1st Kasbah Bliss; 2nd Punchestown; 3rd Big Bucks. If only it were that easy!

Clearly this is the most likely scenario, but the bookies aren't stupid and the 3 animals in question are priced accordingly (I actually make Kasbah Bliss a fair bet at 5/4).

Looking outside these 3, there is a real paucity of credible challengers. You are stuck with the old familiar faces and some unlikely runners. However, there is one horse that doesn't meet these criteria. It's relatively unexposed and has been aimed at the race all season. The horse in question is Tazbar.

Tazbar has long been considered the best horse in Ketih Reveley's stable (no big deal I admit!) - but also the best horse he's ever been associated with (a slightly bigger deal - his mother trained Cab on Target, a very useful stayer).

Last year, Tazbar first caught my eye when he beat Whiteoak over a wholly unsuitable 2 miles at Doncaster - Whiteoak subsequently won the mares race at the festival. Tazbar then went off the boil and has taken some time to come to himself this year.

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However, his last 3 runs have been steadily progressive, culminating in a tremendous second under top weight to Synchronised in the Pertemps qualifier at Haydock. That effort earned him a speed rating higher than Kasbah Bliss earned on the first race that day and will have been overlooked by many.

As I mentioned at the beginning, there are at least 3 worthy opponents, and it's unlikely that all 3 will be off their game. However, it is also quite feasible that at least one of them will run below expectations or that Tazbar will improve by the required 10lb or so to start troubling them. At around 33/1, he could be decent each-way value against the market principals.

The Gold Cup

Of the 4 big Championship races, this is probably the most difficult one to play in at this point in time. Potentially, any of Paul Nicholl's triumvirate could win. It would be difficult to back reigning champion Denman on the back of his come-back run and the negative vibes coming out of Ditchheat.

Kauto Star is a worthy favourite but nagging doubts remain about how much he has deteriorated this season and he's no value at 15/8. Neptunes Collonge is the most solid of the three and almost an EW bet to nothing at 6/1 - but he is also the least likely winner if all 3 bring their 'A' game to the table.

Exotic Dancer has a chance but he's not been good enough in the past and there is no reason to believe he has improved. Madison De Berlais could have improved but I can't buy it myself. Alberta's Run has a definite chance on genuinely good ground. However, the bookmakers seem to have the race priced about right and this is a race where no bet is the current call.

Other Championship Races

The Bumper looks a minefield and it would be impossible to play with any confidence without knowing the final entries. The Triumph looks a very hot race - with 4 or 5 possible winners. The David Nicholson Mares race has a strange shape due to the uncertainty over the participation of ante-post favourite Whiteoak and the Foxhunters looks similar to the bumper (though Amicelli was a very impressive winner last year and would be the current selection at around 10/1). This just leaves the Ryanair chase, which is a race where a selection can be made.

Ryanair Chase

The Ryanair is in danger of cutting up into one of the least competitive races of the meeting. Currently, opposition to Voy Por Ustedes is decidedly thin on the ground and even if numbers somehow materialise, I can't see where the quality will come from.

To my mind, if Voy Por performs to his peak, he will probably win but there is one horse that I think could possibly beat him even if that is the case (and certainly if it isn't). This is one of my strongest bets of the meeting and the horse in question is Imperial Commander.

Imperial Commander put up a scintillating performance to win the Paddy Power back in November (beating Barbers Shop - currently 16/1 for the gold cup). However, the clincher for me with Imperial, is how well he was travelling just before the straight in

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his only other race this year, the King George. At approximately, the distance of the Ryanair, he was going much better than Voy Por.

For whatever reason (stable form or stamina), he didn't finish his race that day but only a top class chaser can travel like that in championship races. Add into the mix the fact he's won round the course previously and has scope for significant improvement and he's look a good bet. Given the way the race is cutting up, we could be looking at a maximum each-way selection on the day but we'll see what it looks like next week.

Novice Races

There are 6 novice only races run at the festival: 3 over hurdles and 3 over fences. The Supreme Novice hurdle is run over the minimum trip of 2 miles. The Ballymore Properties hurdle is run over 2 miles 5 furlongs and the Albert Bartlett hurdle is run over 3 miles.

The Arkle chase is run over 2 miles; the RSA chase over 3 miles and the NH novice chase over 4 miles (and restricted to amateur riders).

Supreme Novice Hurdle

Historically, one of the best places to start when trying to find the winner of this race is the previous years Championship bumper. The winner of that race, Cousin Vinny, is currently favourite for the Supreme at 3/1. However, a few lengths behind in fourth place, was the Brendan Powell trained Shoreacres. Turning into the straight that day, Shoreacres looked to be travelling just as well as the winner.

However, he was hampered up the straight and could only keep on to finish fourth. First time out this year, he was a very impressive winner at Huntingdon. He followed this up with a creditable third to a peak form Dee Ee Williams. On his third outing of the year, he was given a very strange ride, but still managed to finish third to Mad Max and Pause and Clause (to whom he was giving 10lbs). On his final outing, he was looking like winning very easily, before taking a crashing fall 2 out.

Assuming the fall has not affected his confidence, I can see him going very close in this race (especially as the Powell team are now in better form). He may have a few lengths/pounds to make up on one or two of the principals and consequently, is only a speculative EW call, but a good jump or a bit of luck in running will more than off-set that and at 50/1 he is worth taking a chance with.

Ballymore Properties Hurdle

I will be amazed if the winner of this race doesn't come from the top 4 in the betting: Diamond Harry, Karabak, Mikael D'Haguenet & Mad Max. The bookies have them priced up in that sequence - but I believe they have got it almost completely the wrong way round!

On his seasonal debut, Mad Max beat Karabak at Ascot - general consensus at the time was that Mad Max was the more likely of the 2 to improve- yet following 2 subsequent victories, Karabak is now roughly half the price of Mad Max.

I think Diamond Harry is an enormous talent - but he clearly has some wayward tendencies. Make no mistake, this is a top-notch race and any chinks will be exposed

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and at 7/2, I couldn't back him. I think Mikael D'Haguenet is a class act - but he needs soft ground and I worry about his ability to come down the hill.

This leaves Mad Max. He's unbeaten in 4 runs, his form is rock solid, he has scope for improvement and he's is trained by the supreme master trainer, Nicky Henderson. Henderson will ensure he is at his absolutely peak for the day (I believe he has had a wind operation since his last win). He simply must go very close and at 8/1, warrants a very confident bet.

Arkle Chase

The novice chases are my favourite races to play in ante-post. Back in December in the forum attached to my site, Calgary Bay was put up at 33/1 for this race, following his seasonal debut run at Doncaster. Two races later and he is 6/1 joint favourite for the race!

Whilst I still think he has an excellent chance of winning the race, whether he is any value at that price is debatable.

Tatenen is clearly held in very high regard by the strongest NH stable in the country - so his chances must be respected. If the ground is riding on the quick side, you would have to give Kalahari King a chance and he was put up as a saver on this race at 16/1 - his current price of 10/1 still looks generous if the ground is good.

I won't be playing in this race as it looks very tricky at the moment but I'll be cheering home Calgary Bay with some of my other subscribers who are sitting with 33/1 bets and fingers crossed he can strike gold for us.

RSA Chase

As with the Arkle, an ante-post selection for this race was put up in the forum back in December. The horse in question was Carruthers - at that point available at 33/1 (46 on Betfair). He is now 15/2 third favourite.

Whilst I am not quite as keen on his chances as those of Calgary Bay, I still feel he has a fair chance of landing the prize. I've already laid off my bet on Betfair and will make 36 points risk free if he wins the race. Again, I'll be cheering on him with the rest of my forum users and we are hopeful of a good run.

Of the current outsiders, Killyglen has a chance, as too does Massinis Maguire.

The other 2 novice races: the Arlbert Bartlett hurdle and the NH Chase are both a bit too tricky to call at the moment, with uncertainty over a number of the main contenders.

Handicap Races

There are 11 handicap races run at the festival: 5 over fences; 5 over hurdles and 1 over the cross country course.

It is nearly impossible to bet in these races ante-post as many of the runners are doubly entered and a number will get balloted out of their chosen races.

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Rather than reviewing each race, beneath is a selection of horses to keep an eye out for. They are all likely to have 2 or 3 engagements at the moment, so bets could only be advised once final declarations have been made:

Higgy's Boy: Nicky Henderson is keen to win the race named in honour of his mentor - the Fred Winter hurdle. Higgy's Boy is a very interesting horse - rated 90 on the flat, he has shown significant ability in 2 of his 3 races over jumps. On the other occasion he was well beaten behind Walkon - but that was a high-class event and was run on heavy ground, which he didn't seem to handle. On better going, expect his to put up a much-improved performance.

Dix Villez: Won the cross-country chase at the November meeting in controversial circumstances, as his rider, Davy Russell took one or two short cuts! Because of the nature of the win, it is likely that the market will oppose his attempt to follow up - siding instead with the JP McManus pair L'Ami and Garde Champetre. This could be a mistake - Dix Villez won on merit that day and on only 1lb worse terms, could well confirm the form.

Pop: Henry Daly has few peers when it comes to preparing a horse for a race at the festival. Pop is a progressive novice who needs better ground than that which he has been forced to run on during the winter months. As a novice, the obvious target for him is the Jewson Novices - but I actually expect him to run in the Festival Plate and believe he will go very well.

Piraya: Has clearly taken some time to acclimatise. He had very useful form in France and was a short price in the early betting for the Paddy Power, on his debut for David Pipe. He didn't figure in that race but has improved on each of his subsequent outings. He can now run off a 10lb lower mark and is likely to go well in his selected event. Pay particular attention if the Coral Cup is his chosen race - Martin Pipe successfully took almost exactly the same route with Ilnamar a few years back.

Penn Da Benn: Has always suggested he had significant ability but has been a revelation in his last 2 outings, wining both easily. Last time, the 2m6f in soft ground seemed to stretch his stamina a little, so a drop back to 2m5f for the Coral Cup would seem a sensible choice. He travels incredibly well in his races, so an IR lay to cover stakes may be a good idea for those who play on the exchanges.

Naiad Du Misselot: I pointed this out to readers of the Racing Post Weekender paper a long time ago but this horse has been plotted up to win the Jewson Novices from day one this season and I'll be fascinated to see how it gets on. It won the Coral Cup last year and looks very well handicapped over fences and I'm sure we haven't seen the best of it yet this season. Has to improve on what he has shown thus far over fences but I'm sure he will and the trainer (Ferdy Murphy) is as shrewd as they come.

Good luck to everyone.

Graeme Dand & Andrew Rigby
www.theformanalyst.co.uk

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TIPPING LEGENDS: Day By Day Analysis of The Festival's Key Trends

Tipster: Tipping Legends

Website address: <http://www.tippinglegends.com/>

Cheltenham analysis summary:

- Key stats for all the major races.
- In 25 years, no horse has won the Gold Cup after being placed the previous year.
- No horse over 10/1 has won the Arkle.

The Tipsters:

Tipping Legends is run by Jeremiah Catskill and Roger Green who are two professional punters. Jeremiah is primarily a form student & a value seeker. His average SP is around the 7/1 mark. Roger founded Roger Green Racing as a professional tipping service wayback in 1987. It all started as a result of his successful racing column in the Sunday Independent based in Plymouth.

Tipling Legends provide daily racing advice as well as special analysis for the festivals. Last year at Cheltenham, Tipping Legends found 6 winners and had 16 winning bets for a profit of 40 points with an ROI of 63.8%.

Winners were - Crackaway Jack 14/1, Albertas Run 4/1, Celestial Halo 5/1, Neptune Collonges 16/1, Tiger Cry 15/2 & Whiteoak 20/1.

EW advices placed - New Alco 10/1, Punjabi 25/1, Snap Tie 25/1, Barbers Shop 12/1, Burntoak Boy 12/1, Corskeagh Royale 7/1, Bon Accord 12/1, Mendo 14/1, TheTotherOne 9/2 & Trafford Lad 9/1

You can subscribe to their special Cheltenham service here:

<http://www.tippinglegends.com/#/specials/4526976614>

Selecting the Winners at Cheltenham

I am now spending several hours a day preparing my portfolio of horses for the Festival.

At this stage, I study all previous records and trends in an attempt to narrow down each race and hopefully exclude those with little or no chance. Once this is done for each race, I then study

- (1) Trainer form going into the Festival
- (2) Jockey form
- (3) Going and likely changes if any , during the day

I then make my final selection(s) on the morning of race day

I will now highlight some important stats that I use .

Tuesday & Wednesday

Tuesday 10th March.

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Supreme Novices Hurdle

The opening race of the meeting and often a huge betting heat with several fancied Irish horses running each year. In fact Irish trained horse have won 10 of the last 17 runnings of this race.

The key stat for me though is that over the last 35 years , 88% of the winners have been either 5 or 6 yrs old, and more significantly 12 out of the last 13 winners had won their last race !!

Ex flat horses have a good record in this race, but only when the going is good or faster.

At the time of writing, 68 entries have stood their ground, but 21 are removed as not being 5 or 6. So we are already only looking at 47 runners! (I am still looking at one "dark" horse outside this stat so looking at 48

Now we look at how many of this 48 won last time out. Answer only 19, so I have already reduced my further selection down to around 20!

Sounds easy! And it is not fool proof of course, but stats and experience tell me the winner will come from this 20. I Hope this gives you some idea of our methods. One footnote, a 40/1 & 20/1 winner has won this race in the last 10 years!

Champion Hurdle

First, a well known stat. Only one 5yr old has won in last 23 years, and that was Katchit last year. This year's red hot favourite, Binocular is 5yr old !!

The most significant stat in this race is that 22 of the last 25 runners won last time out

The Arkle

Only one winner over 7yrs old in last 10 years (Moscow Flyer)

Not a race to back outsiders or dodgy jumpers. Only one winner at more than 10/1 in last 10 years, but only one winning favourite in that time!

William Hill Trophy Handicap Chase

One of the most informative races regarding stats

Only one favourite has won in last 35 years. Plus the last 9 winners carried less than 11 st. Avoid old horses like the plague (11+)

Wednesday 11th March

Ballymore Novices Hurdle

If a horse was not placed 1st or 2nd in its last race, best forget. 24 of last 25 winners had this stat.

Royal Sun Alliance Chase

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Could be the race if you are looking for a juicy outsider with 4 winners priced between 14/1 and 33/1 in last 10 years. 7 and 8 year olds have the best record, and if not placed 1st or 2nd in last race, put your pen through as 31 of the last 34 winners ticked this box!

Champion Chase

A better record for favourites here, possibly because usually a small field

Coral Cup

A very competitive hurdle with many gambles on the day. Worth remembering that 8 of last 11 winners carried no more than 10st.

Champion Bumper Race

Irish trained 13 of last 16 winners, with Willie Mullins producing 6 of them. 5yr olds have by far the best record, and last time out winners have won no less than 14 of the last 16 runners.

Now you can all go and burn the midnight oil and start your homework. Just one word of caution, winners are not found just by using stats, although they are of immense help.

The great thing about the Festival is that if you narrow your selections in a race to say 3 or 4, you can usually back them all in most races, safe in the knowledge that you will show a profit, assuming the winner is included!! Good Luck

Thursday and Friday.

Thursday 12th March

World Hurdle - The feature race of the day run over 3 miles. Not many long priced winners, but favourites have won 5 times in last 15 years. No Irish trained winners in last 15 years, and no 5 year old has EVER won.

RyanAir Chase- only introduced 4 years ago, and is a class 2 chase over 2m 5 f. Rapidly becoming a favoured race at the Festival, attracting quality fields. In four runnings most winners and placed horses have been in the first 4 in the betting. Early days, but not a race for outsiders so far.

Jewson Novices Handicap - another new race , a novice chase over 2m 5 f. Only 4 runnings, but each winner so far has been aged 7

Pertemps Final - Handicap Hurdle over 3 miles. Often a race subject to huge gambles in the morning, and not a race to get involved with if you are of a nervous disposition. 2 of the last 5 winners had SP of 50/1. Only 2 winning favourites in 15 years and only one 5 yr old has won in last 35 years.

Kim Muir Handicap Chase - over extended 3 miles and ridden by amateur jockeys

Take my advice and go to the bar (if at the races) or make a cup of tea (if at home). 14/1 , 33/1 , 12/1 , 40/1 , 33/1 are the SP's of 5 of the last 6 winners. Irish trained

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only 1 winner in 25 years. 8-9 year olds have won 80% of the last 35 runnings.

Friday March 13th- Gold Cup day

Gold Cup - the "big one" run over 3m 2f. 5 winning favourites in last 15 years. Now here is an interesting stat. In the last 25 years no horse that was placed in the previous years race, has won 12 months later! Horses older than 10 have not won for 40 years. Significantly, 9 of the last 11 winners were placed at the Festival before

Triumph Hurdle - 2 mile hurdle race for 4 yr old novice hurdles

Some very useful stats here. Only 2 winning favourites in last 15 years, but 8 winners with SP in single figures! Biggest priced winner in 15 years is 20/1. Here is the key stat, 14 of last 15 winners had won at least twice, so experience vital

County Hurdle - a competitive handicap over 2m 1f.

Only 3 winners started at SP greater than 16/1 in last 35 years and last year's winner started at 50/1!

Trainer and Jockey Trends

Jockeys - AP McCoy has ridden the most Festival winners (20), but his first winner was 1996 (Kibreet). Ruby Walsh has ridden 17 winners, but 14 of them have been in the last 4 years! Choc Thornton has ridden 9 winners in 3 years.

Trainers - Nicky Henderson has trained an incredible 31 winners, 11 more than Paul Nicholls. The leading Irish trainer with 18 winners is Edward O'Grady

I hope these trends will have helped you in your selection process for this years Festival. Hopefully it will have narrowed down the fields for you, and not discarded too many winners! Above all enjoy every moment of what is the greatest NH spectacle in the world.

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RACING TRENDS: Cheltenham Trends by David Renham

Tipster: Dave Renham Racing Trends

Website address: <http://www.racingtrends.co.uk/>

Cheltenham analysis summary:

- Key stats for the festival and all of Friday's races analysed in detail.
- In the Gold Cup 9 out of the last 10 winners were Irish trained.
- In Gold Cup 6 of the last 10 winners ran in the King George VI chase the previous December.

The Tipster:

Dave Renham is a renowned racing statistician and system creator. Dave Renham's past CV includes Racing Post Spotlight, while currently he is a regular feature writer for the newspaper Racing and Football Outlook. His work on the RFO includes examining long term horse racing statistics and trends, trainer patterns and betting systems.

In short some of the top Racing Newspapers in the country have considered Dave an expert worth paying for Horse Racing Research. RacingTrends is in effect Dave Renham's service for Private Clients. There are two parts to the service:

1. The first part of the service focuses on major races and meetings throughout the horse racing year. Research is detailed and betting advice selective.
2. The second part of the service focuses more on day to day racing with value bets given from time to time. The focus of the service is to make long term profits and thus bets will only be given out when they offer exceptional value.

Dave plans to offer a months free trial, but unfortunately Dave is taking a break shortly after the festival. So to ensure you don't miss out, sign up to the free newsletter for details of the forthcoming free trial. <http://www.racingtrends.co.uk/newsletter.php>

Cheltenham trends by David Renham

Here are some trends for the last 10 Festival meetings:

All races

1. Favourites (inc. joints) have provided 57 winners from 235 runners (SR 24.3%) for a loss of £14.27 (ROI -6.1%).
2. There have been 6 odds-on favourites - 3 have won, 3 have lost.
3. The top 3 in the betting have provided 50.7% of the winners.
4. Horses priced 66/1 or bigger have provided 1 winner from 639 qualifiers (22 others finished placed).
5. Horses aged 11 or older have provided just 6 winners from 296 runners for a loss of £185.00 (ROI -62.5%).

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6. Paul Nicholls has saddled the most winners (20) but backing all his runners would have produced a loss of £88.17 (ROI -38.7%).

7. Jonjo O'Neill has saddled 13 winners from 134 runners for a profit of £63.38 (ROI +47.3%).

8. Ruby Walsh (17) and Tony McCoy (16) have ridden the most winners. However, backing all McCoy's mounts would have produced a loss of £101.00 (ROI -59.8%).

9. British stables have saddled 155 winners (SR 5.1%); Irish Stables have saddled 56 winners (SR 7.4%); French stables have saddled 5 winners (SR 8.8%).

10. Following the top rated (or joint top rated) horse from the Racing Post Ratings (formerly Postmark) would have provided 52 winners from 305 qualifiers (SR 17%) for a small loss of £12.24 (ROI -4%).

Grade 1 races

1. Favourites (inc. joints) have provided 30 winners from 109 runners (SR 27.5%) for a loss of £11.83 (ROI -9.1%).

2. The top 2 in the betting have provided 49% of the winners.

3. 63 of the 102 winners were priced under 8/1.

4. Horses priced 66/1 or bigger have provided 343 consecutive losers with just 7 placed efforts. (Going back further to 1992, the figures read 0 wins, 11 placed from 517 runners).

5. Horses aged 11 or older have provided 1 winner from 45 runners.

6. Alan King has saddled 8 winners from 37 (SR 21.6%) for a profit of £28.50 (ROI +77%); Howard Johnson has saddled 6 winners from 26 (SR 23.1%) for a profit of £25.88 (ROI +99.5%).

Handicap chases

1. Favourites (inc. joints) have provided 10 winners from 54 runners (SR 18.5%) for a loss of £4.25 (ROI -7.9%).

2. The top 3 in the betting have provided 47.9% of the winners.

3. Horses priced 7/2 to 7/1 have provided 17 winners for a small profit of £11.50 (ROI +12.1%).

4. The top 4 in the weights (inc. joints) have provided only 6 winners from 211 runners for a hefty loss of £136.00 (ROI -64.5%).

5. Horses carrying 11st or more have provided 9 winners from 325. This is just half the number of winners one would expect given a normal distribution of winners.

6. Horses carrying between 10st 1lb and 10st 13lb have provided 33 of the 48 winners. This equates to 68.8% of the winners from 48.9% of the runners.

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7. Paul Nicholls has saddled just 2 winners from 75 for a loss of £57.00 (ROI -76%).
8. Nicky Henderson has saddled 6 winners and 16 placed horses from 59 for a profit of £28.00 (ROI +47.5%).
9. Phillip Hobbs is 0 from 34; Nigel Twiston-Davies is 0 from 32.
10. Horses wearing blinkers / visors have provided just 2 winners from 121 runners (SR 1.7%) for a loss of £98.00 (ROI -81%).

Handicap hurdles

1. Favourites (inc. joints) have provided 8 winners from 38 runners (SR 21.1%) for a profit of £4.38 (ROI +11.5%).
2. Second and third favourites (inc. joints) have provided just 3 winners from 74 (SR 4.1%) for a loss of £49.50 (ROI -66.9%).
3. Irish stables have provided 10 winners from 153 runners (SR 6.5%) for a profit of £52.00 (ROI +34%). They have provided 29.4% of the winners from 17.8% of the total runners.
4. 17 of the 34 of the winners won LTO. Hence 50% of the races were won from just 20% of the total runners.
5. Horses aged 10 or older have provided 0 winners from 59 (just 4 placed).
6. Topspeed top rated selection in the Racing Post has selected the winner on just one occasion.
7. Course winners have a dreadful record with just 1 win from 152 runners for a loss of £146.50 (ROI -96.4%).
8. Nicky Henderson is 0 from 39.

Friday race trends - here is a more detailed look at individual races with the 10 year stats and trends for the key races on the final day (Friday).

1.30 JCB Triumph Hurdle

POSITIVE TRENDS

Recent form: 8 of the last 10 winners won LTO.
Market: 5 of the last 10 winners came from the top two in the betting.
Wins: 8 of the last 10 winners have won at least 2 races over hurdles.
Course LTO: Horses coming from Kempton or Sandown LTO have an excellent record with 7 wins (4 at Kempton; 3 at Sandown).
Last run: All of the last 10 winners had run within the last 7 weeks.
Distance LTO: All of the last 10 winners raced at a distance of 2m 1f or less LTO.
Running style: 9 of the last 10 winners raced prominently / up with the pace.

NEGATIVE TRENDS

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Wins: Maidens from English stables have produced 33 consecutive losers.
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GENERAL STATS

Favourites: 3 wins from 10.

Finishing positions of favourites: 4, 1, 1, PU, 3, 10, 3, 1, 10, 2

Trends Summary: This race has some strong positive trends and the horse to look for is a LTO winner, who has won at least twice over hurdles. Having said last year's winner Celestial Halo bucked both these trends. However, taking a long term view is the key with trends and overall those two stats are still very strong. Look also for horses that have had their last race in the past 7 weeks, with preference to those coming from Kempton or Sandown. From a running style perspective, despite a big field it has paid to lie handy and up with the pace. Just 1 win for hold up horses in the last 10 renewals.
--

2.05 County Handicap Hurdle

POSITIVE TRENDS

Favourites (inc. joints): 4 wins from 12 qualifiers (PROFIT of £9.38; ROI +78.2%).

Recent form: 8 of the last 10 winners finished in the first three LTO.

Age: 6 of the last 10 winners were aged 5.

Running style: 9 of the last 10 winners were held up in midfield or at the back of field before coming to deliver their challenge late.
--

LTO course: 5 of the 10 winners raced at Newbury LTO; 4 of them raced in the Totesport Gold Trophy; in fact 4 of the last 7 winners ran in the Totesport Gold Trophy.
--

NEGATIVE TRENDS

Headgear: Horses wearing blinkers, visors, cheekpieces or tongue straps have provided just 1 winner from 51. (LOSS of £46.00; ROI -90.2%).

GENERAL STATS

Finishing positions of favourites: 1, 2, 1, 13, PU, 1/5, 11, 1/10, 25, 2

Trends Summary: 5yos have an excellent record winning 60% of the races from under 23% of the total runners. Favourites have also done remarkably well considering how competitive the race is. A good trial seems to be the Totesport Gold Trophy at Newbury as 4 of the last 7 winners ran in the race.

3.20 Totesport Cheltenham Gold Cup

POSITIVE TRENDS

Recent form: 6 of the last 10 winners won LTO. All of the last 10 winners had won at least 1 of their last 3 starts.

Market: 8 of the last 10 winners came from the top three in the betting.

Festival Form: 8 of the last 10 winners had won or been placed at a previous Festival.

Age: 9 of the last 10 winners were aged 7, 8 or 9 (14 of the last 15).

Career: All of the last 10 winners have had less than 20 races in their career.
--

Course LTO: 9 of the last 10 winners came from one of four tracks - Cheltenham, Leopardstown, Newbury or Kempton.
--

King George: 6 of the last 10 winners ran in the King George VI chase the previous December.

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Official ratings: Horses with an OR of 166 or bigger have produced 7 winners from only 22 qualifiers.
--

Days since last run: All of the last 10 winners had not raced for at least a month.
--

Breeding: Irish bred runners have provided 9 of the last 10 winners.

NEGATIVE TRENDS

Age: Horses aged 10 or older are 1 win from 54.
--

GENERAL STATS

Favourites: 4 wins from 10.

Finishing positions of favourites: 3, 3, 4, PU, 1, 1, 1, 11, 1, 2
--

Trends Summary: A race with plenty of positive trends. A good starting point is to look for horses that have had less than 20 career runs as all 10 winners passed that test. Couple this with a 7 to 9yo which is Irish bred and you should have eliminated several runners. A good recent run is a definite plus and going back to 1987 we find that 19 of the last 21 winners were placed at worst LTO. Also look for horses that have ran well in a previous Cheltenham Festival. Respect horses that ran in the King George, and a key stat is to look for horses rated 166 or higher. They have provided 70% of the winners from just 15% of the runners!
--

4.00 Christie's Foxhunter Steeplechase Challenge Cup

POSITIVE TRENDS

Recent form: 6 of the last 10 winners won LTO.

Price: 6 of the last 10 winners were priced 14/1 or bigger (6 out of the last 8).
--

Running style: 8 of the last 10 winners raced prominently.

Fitness: 9 of the last 10 winners had raced within 5 weeks of their most recent run (either under "rules" or in a point to point).

Career: All of the last 10 winners had won a race under "rules".

NEGATIVE TRENDS

Age: Horses aged 11 or older have won 2 races but from 85 qualifiers (LOSS of £53.00; ROI - 62.4%).
--

Sex of horse: Only 12 mares have contested the race in the last 10 years but all have finished unplaced.

GENERAL STATS

Favourites: 2 wins from 10.

Finishing positions of favourites: 5, 2, 5, PU, 1, PU, 1, PU, 2, PU
--

Trends Summary: A good starting point is to eliminate horses aged 11 or older. If we go back 17 years, we see that 11yos plus remain on just 2 victories and they generally supply around 40% of the runners. Last time out winners have a good record although not as good as it once was (only 3 of the last 7 winners won LTO; previously to that it had been 15 wins from 16). Concentrate on horses that have won a race under "rules", horses that race right up with the pace and those who have run within the past 5 weeks.

5.15 Johnny Henderson Grand Annual Steeplechase

POSITIVE TRENDS

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Recent form: 7 of the last 10 winners finished in the first three LTO.
Favourites: 4 of the last 10 were favourites (PROFIT of £9.50; ROI +95.0%).
Price: 8 of the last 10 winners had an SP in single figures.
Age: 9 of the last 10 winners were aged 9 or younger.
Weight: 9 of the last 10 winners carried 10st 11lb or less.
Official rating: 7 of the last 10 winners were rated between 130 and 134.
Trainers: Irish trainers have won 4 of the last 9 renewals (with 3 seconds).

NEGATIVE TRENDS

Age: Horses aged 10 or older are 1 win from 40.
--

GENERAL STATS

Finishing positions of favourites: 1, 1, 1, 2, 5, 1, 14, F, 6, 2

Trends Summary: Horses aged 10 and older should be eliminated as just two have made the frame from 40 starters in the last 10 years. Low weighted horses have done well (10st 11lb or less) as have runners priced in single figures. Horses with an official OR of between 130 and 134 have provided 70% of the winners from only 28% of the total runners. Irish trainers should be respected as they have a terrific recent record. Favourites have a good record overall but it is 4 renewals since they were successful.
--

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BIG MIKE BETTING: **Big Mike's Cheltenham Lucky 15**

Tipster: Big Mike Betting.

Website address: <http://www.bigmikebetting.co.uk/>

Cheltenham analysis summary:

- A lucky 15 bet for the festival
- Choc Thornton to be top jockey
- Willie Mullins to be top trainer.

The Tipster:

Big Mike Betting is now entering my 9th year in business and every year has been a winning one so far. Mike invites you to join much respected service in time for the 2009 Cheltenham Festival (10th - 13th March)

Offers:

Mike's monthly subscription rate is normally £69.00 but to celebrate the launch of a brand new website and forums he would like to offer readers of this guide the following discounted offers:

Join the service next week - on Monday 9th March - for the Cheltenham Festival week - and receive a bonus week thereafter - for just £19.95

Or

Buy one month and get one month free i.e. the whole 60 days (until close of business on the 8th May 2009) for a low price of just £34.50. Equivalent to less than £5 a week or less than 60p a day (normal rates thereafter but, of course, without any obligation)

As well as Cheltenham week you will get all Mike's advice for the Aintree Grand national meeting and Mike's US Masters Golf Tournament bets - Traditionally one of his best periods in the sporting calendar.

These offers will entitle you to receive Mike's daily 'menu' of selected bets sent direct to your mailbox (or accessed via the website, if you wish) and unlimited access to my forums where you will find additional profitable advice from the many professional members who post there.

Join Now by copying and pasting either of the links into your browser:

2 Week Offer http://www.bigmikebetting.co.uk/members/signup.php?price_group=-5877

or

2 Month Offer http://www.bigmikebetting.co.uk/members/signup.php?price_group=-5879

Alternative bets for Cheltenham and a lucky 15

Most people realise my service is better served for those who prefer longer term 'cute' bets which annoy bookmakers. Sadly Cheltenham doesn't throw up many frames to

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enable me to make a killing. I suppose I would be better off finding a dark `un at Sedgefield or Taunton.

However the terrific enjoyment given by the Festival really should be classed as a `Special Event` and I have no qualms in supporting those who have made steady profits during the year to have a wild fling at HQ. Bit like having a big celebration I suppose as long as it's back to the Office after the last day!

There are hundreds of professionals who will have given their views so I have preferred to put up a bet to play over the 4 days which will give a bit of interest and also some hedging opportunities as well.

I have been particularly successful over the years in Bumpers and members have enjoyed a good season again this time round. Willie Mullins could have his own Champion Bumper event in County Carlow - maybe he has already - but I will not be following the herd and I am opposing (ew as ever) with Dinguib.

In any `Lucky 15` bet one should have a banker. Mine is the highly thought of Kasbah Bliss in the World Hurdle.

We have also followed the exploits of Ebadiyan this winter and I for one would be delighted to see the unsung - but not unheard - Oliver Brady bellowing in the winners enclosure should the unthinkable (to many) happen.

The initial bet is on Whiteoak who needs the better ground and will surely give a good account. I would be very happy to see the McCains do well at Cheltenham.

Financially its money that is already written off - it has to be at Cheltenham - but hopefully my total £350 bet - I suppose it's only a nights B & B at the wonderful Lygon Arms in equivalent terms - will give a few days fun. Remember if playing the Lucky 15 though to use someone like bet365.com who will pay at least double odds on one winner.

My main bet is the £8 ew Lucky 15 with bet365.com - who are offering NR No Bet AND best price - either the price quoted or SP - which is very fair as always a strong market at Cheltenham.

Two other bets to give interest over the whole of the meeting. Alan King has a formidable hand at the Festival and I think the best way in could be to support `Choc` Thornton in his quest to be top jockey.

I am having £30 ew on Choc Thornton to be Top Jockey (ew 1/4 first 3) during the Festival @ 8/1 with sportingbet.com.

Finally I am having £50 on Willie Mullins to be the Top Trainer at the Festival @ the general 5/1 seen.

Big Mikes £8 ew Festival Lucky 15:

Whiteoak @ 3/1 David Nicholson 440 Tuesday

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Dunguib @ 6/1 Champion Bumper 515 Wednesday

Kasbah Bliss @ 11/10 World Hurdle 320 Thursday

Ebadiyan 9/1 (first four) Triumph Hurdle on Friday 1.30

Other bets

£30 ew on Choc Thornton to be Top Jockey (ew 1/4 first 3)

£50 on Willie Mullins to be the Top Trainer

GOOD LUCK to whoever may sail with me.

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HERBIE FOGG: Cheltenham Survival Guide and Top Tips.

Tipster: Herbie Fogg

Website address: <http://www.herbiefogg.com/>

Cheltenham analysis summary:

- Why the difference between the old and new course is important.
- Back Kasbah Bliss and Voy Por Ustedes.
- Look for Tatenen in the Arkle.

The Tipster:

Herbie Fogg is a professional gambler and form analyst from www.herbiefogg.com. Readers of this guide can obtain a permanent 15% discount on all Herbie Fogg subscriptions, and during March there are extra value 'Early Bird' discounts for his brand new Quest service which commences 1st April 2009 - where, in a unique annual challenge, Herbie will attempt to make 200 pts from 200 selections during the British flat turf season.

In addition to Kasbah Bliss and Voy Por Ustedes, Herbie tips: Quevega in the David Nicholson, Poquelin in the Grand Annual and Tatenen in the Arkle. A more comprehensive Cheltenham breakdown is available to members of the Herbie Fogg Edge service, published Monday 8th March.

There is a 15% off deal on the cost of memberships but you do need to be an existing Secret Betting Club or Money Maker Review member to take this up. If you do have an existing membership and wish to take advantage of this offer, contact us for a special username and password, and then visit www.herbiefogg.com/#/sbcmmrlogin/4533066441

Bike Clips & Bankers: Your festival survival guide.

His Holiness Nick Mordin recently reported that, statistically speaking, the first 5 in the Gold Cup betting can't win, and yet this doesn't seem to have frightened anyone off. I recall last year Katchit couldn't win the Champion Hurdle - 2008 was particularly hard on trend spotters. Trend spotters, form players, pin-stickers, tipsters, jockeys and trainers. Cheltenham is tough and the more competitive it gets, the harder it becomes - and 2009 looks like being more competitive than ever. It's a broad church of opinion.

You just can't trust trends at Cheltenham - the only sure trend is its sheer unpredictability and that is why, speaking as a statistics based backer, the Festival is an event I approach armed with Guinness, a stout pair of bike clips and a strong degree of suspicion.

Cross Country aside, the first thing to bear in mind is that there are two distinct courses. The Old Course, used on Tuesday and Wednesday, is sharp and calls for speed - whereas on Thursday and Friday the New Course with its sweeping curves and extended run-in is a different kind of beast that, not unlike the Guinness Village itself, places a rare emphasis on both speed and stamina.

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To win on the New Course you need speed as a prerequisite and yet you can't win without a full measure of true staying power. For that very reason alone some horses come alive on the New Course and some don't. Take Albertas Run for instance, given the ground.

Of its kind, the World Hurdle provides an unusually tough test, and one only a few horses appear fully capable of - which is why previous form is significant, and why the same names seem to re-appear well to the fore. On the New Course horses like Kasbah Bliss and Voy Por Ustedes are regarded by many as festival bankers because they have the current season form in the book and the credentials in the bank. Personally, I wouldn't back against either of them.

An unusual feature of the Old Course with it's fast and furious profile is that form from Kempton, which at first glance is a very different kettle of fish, often translates well provided the horse in question acts left-handed. Kempton form is, however, less relevant on the New Course - and why Madison Du Berlais' recent performance, taken in tandem with existing Cheltenham form, leaves an ambiguous impression. He has also taken an unusually large number of races to present top class credentials, so the statisticians can't have him - and yet here he is, an equine Cinderella. Not for me though.

The Gold Cup, run on the New Course, has a habit of getting to the bottom of horses like no other race - success leaves its mark and past winners have a habit of fading from the picture as top level performers. In the modern era few horses have bucked this trend and it will take a big performance from Kauto Star to regain the laurels - but he is an exceptional talent who has received a better preparation in 2009, and will run fresh. And he'll need to be, because Neptune Collonges will be aiming to run the finish out of him, especially on soft - and on good ground it is not beyond possibility that the beneficiary of all this will be Albertas Run who has a perfect record on stiff tracks and ideal conditions.

Which brings me neatly to the majorest of major players, namely the going - that and the unpredictable style of racing. Some years it pays to be to the fore, kick down the hill and set sail, while in other years horses leading over the last are constantly challenged and grabbed on the run in. In the face of Cheltenham's great unpredictability it pays to prepare options for going, to trim your shortlist on the fly and to give close attention to the evidence of your eyes.

The sensible strategy is to pace yourself, to enjoy the many benefits afforded by Guinness and to work your way into it - keeping your powder dry and betting selectively. A tentative nibble at the Supreme Novices Hurdle, a demure probing of the Arkle - perhaps even charting a course far, far away from the agony of the William Hill Trophy.

But that is not going to happen. Bring lots of cash, yes bring it all, and strap in. But don't forget your bike clips.

Bon courage,

Herbie

In addition to Kasbah Bliss and Voy Por Ustedes, Herbie tips: Quevega in the David Nicholson, Poquelin in the Grand Annual and Tatenen in the Arkle. A more

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comprehensive Cheltenham breakdown is available to members of the Herbie Fogg Edge service, published Monday 8th March.

To obtain the extra 15% SBC / MMR discount, contact us for the username and password, then visit this link: www.herbiefogg.com/#/sbcmmrlogin/4533066441 or use this link: <http://tinyurl.com/7ky6p7>

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NICK PULLEN: My 16/1 shot for the Ryanair Chase

Tipster: Nick Pullen (Horse Racing Focus)

Website address: <http://www.horseracingfocus.co.uk>

Cheltenham analysis summary:

- 16/1 fancy for the Ryanair Chase.
- Don't be sucked into short priced certainties.
- The squeaky wheel that needs no grease.

The Tipster:

Horse Racing Focus is written by Nick Pullen. In late 2002 Nick pitched up at the head-offices of a major bookmaker. The poacher was now working for the gamekeeper. From day one his intention was to observe the bookmaker's operation from the inside... and learn what he could of the bookmaking industry's secrets... working on the principle that to know your enemy is to know how to beat him. In late 2004 Nick started to distribute his Racing Advisory e-letter carrying picks based on the speed ratings, profiling methods and contrarian trend-spotting techniques he had spent years honing. The advisory's proudest moment came in 2006 when Mudawin was advised to win the Ebor at the princely price of 100/1 and duly obliged.

Early in 2007 Nick and his work came to the attention of the editorial team at Oxfordshire Press. It was a true meeting of minds. Nick was immediately retained and left the bookmaking industry in June 2007 to prepare the ground for his e-letter service, Horse Racing Focus.

These days Nick combines his betting activity with full-time work on Horse Racing Focus. Whether he's at the track, on the road or at his desk, he's working like a madman to bring his growing army of readers regular doses of cutting edge information, unique analysis and winning advice in what has to be the most entertaining and educational format in the business.

In short he's giving racing punters of all levels exactly what they need and just how they like it - straight from the horse's mouth.

You can sign up to Nick's Free newsletter at <http://www.horseracingfocus.co.uk>

My 16/1 shot for the Ryanair Chase...

I'll tell you a little about my fancy. Aged 5, the youngest horse in the race, and running for only the third time over fences, this horse finished 2nd of 21 runners in a G3 handicap at the Cheltenham Festival last year.

In its next race, just three weeks later, this same horse tackled the big Grand National fences in the Topham Chase and won with a very bold display of jumping - beating 28 rivals home and giving weight to all but two of his opponents. His performance prompted his trainer to say 'He is barely 16 hands high but he is a horse on springs.' His rider was no less effusive, saying 'He danced round there. He was fantastic all the way.'

Those are pretty impressive performances from a young horse at the start of his

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chasing career. Since then the horse has won again at Ascot and his overall record reads 3 wins, a 2nd and a 3rd from 6 runs over fences. I am, of course, talking about the precocious and progressive Gwanako, trained by Paul Nicholls and ridden to his successes by Ruby Walsh.

Gwanako fits the Ryanair Chase bill...

The Nicholls and Walsh partnership has form of some significance in the Ryanair Chase. They won the race in 2005 with Thisthatandtother. And they won it again in 2007 with Taranis. In 2008 they saddled Turko to a 3rd place finish. In other words, since the inception of the Ryanair Chase in 2005, Paul Nicholls and his jockey have a strong track record of finding a horse for the race.

Something else that Gwanako has got going for him is previous Festival form - his 2nd place performance in last year's renewal of the Racing Post Plate. Previous form at Cheltenham Festival meetings is very significant in terms of finding winners in upcoming Festival meetings. I'll bring you more on this significant trend and how to make the most of it next week.

Gwanako is one of the youngest horses in the Ryanair Chase. By the time race day comes round he'll only have raced 7 times over fences. Having watched him race last year I feel he's open to sufficient improvement to be very competitive in what is a Championship event for the two and a half milers.

I am not alone in my thinking. All this week Gwanako has been backed in. Bookmakers have been cutting his odds - and the best price available is now 16/1. With Gwanako entered to run in the Betfair Chase at AScot tomorrow (where he's 7/2 to take the prize) we could see his odds tumble further - which is why I draw your attention to him today. Take a look at the horse yourself and draw your own

Don't get sucked into short-priced certainties....

One thing recent Cheltenham Festivals have taught us is to not get sucked into horses which appear to be short-price certainties.

When horses are all the rage in the press and media and when the rest of the market is backing them into short prices it can seem like the individual horses concerned are somehow unbeatable.

Results at previous Festivals demonstrate how inaccurate that view is - and how expensive it can be to put your faith in it. In 2008, 18 of the 23 horses sent off at prices of 4/1 or lower lost. In 2007, 15 of the 19 horses sent off at 4/1 or lower got beaten. Big races are generally more competitive than the market would have you believe - fertile ground for finding horses to oppose and horses to lay on the exchanges.

Getting sucked into the invincibility of short priced horses is a trap you want to avoid. And it's as well to make a note of it and get it fixed in your mind right now - before the real hype gets underway.

A squeaky wheel that needs no grease....

The weights for this year's Grand National were unveiled on Tuesday in London. And, as has become the custom on these occasions, there was much wailing and gnashing of

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teeth from the contingent of Irish trainers present.

Willie Mullins thinks Snowy Morning (last year's 3rd) has been allotted too much weight by the handicapper. Mouse Morris thinks the same about Irish Grand National Winner, Hear The Echo. So too Charlie Swan about One Cool Cookie and Tom Mullins about Chelsea Harbour.

It's all good fun and games. But the Irish haven't really got too much cause for complaint when you look at the last few renewals of the National. They've had 4 out of the last 6 winners and last year, though the winner was trained in England, Irish horses filled the 2nd, 3rd and 4th place berths.

Clearly, Irish horses are a serious threat and certainly haven't been handicapped out of it in recent years - and I wouldn't pay too much mind to what the crafty Irish handlers are saying this year.

It seems to me that the Irish trainers are working on the principle that the squeaky wheel gets the grease. They're bellyaching to the press in the hope of pressurizing the handicapper to treat them favourably in the future. Premier League managers do the same thing to put pressure on referees.

Right now the Irish are talking down their big name horses. We will find out on the big day how justified they are in doing so.

Until next time, be lucky.

Nick Pullen <http://www.horseracingfocus.co.uk>