

PUNDITS' PICKS OF THE DAY

THE ONES TO WATCH OUT FOR ON WED 26TH



RUBY WALSH



MATT CHAPMAN



MICK FITZGERALD



PADDY POWER

KEMPTON 13.20 NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE

RUBY WALSH: **Warthog** won at Sandown last time and can lead from the front to hit the places in this one.

MATT CHAPMAN: **Glen Forsa** jumps well and can follow up his Chepstow win here.

MICK FITZGERALD: **Lough Derg Spirit** has had a wind operation and should improve on the form he's shown so far.

PADDY POWER: Trainer Nicky Henderson always targets this meeting and can get the ball rolling with **Turtle Wars** in the opening race on the box. He looks to be the second string on jockey bookings but is getting a lot of weight off the others. Should be a fair each-way price too.

KEMPTON 13.55 KAUTO STAR NOVICES' CHASE

RUBY WALSH: Santini looks a short enough price given this is always a hot race. He's good but **The Worlds End** could be better value on the day.

MATT CHAPMAN: **Santini** was a class act over hurdles and has taken to jumping fences well, so he's the one for me here.

MICK FITZGERALD: Santini sets the standard but **Topofthegame** could be the value play if you don't like backing short-price favs in novice chases.

PADDY POWER: This is a really hot race and **Santini** was among the leading staying novice hurdlers last season and made a faultless start to his career over fences. There's plenty here to mop up if he doesn't bring his 'A' game but if he wins this he'll be in the notebook as one of the bankers for the Cheltenham Festival.

WETHERBY 14.10 ROWLAND MEYRICK HANDICAP CHASE

RUBY WALSH: **Wakanda** was second in this race last year and looks to be targeted at it, had a recent spin over hurdles and should be fighting fit now.

MATT CHAPMAN: **Crosspark** stays longer than the in-laws at Christmas and that's what needed in this stamina-sapping contest.

MICK FITZGERALD: I tipped **Lake View Lad** to win at Newcastle a few weeks back. He's progressive and can go in again here.

PADDY POWER: **Captain Chaos** is usually my nickname at home when there's any D.I.Y. to be done. However, this lad is far more efficient and the Skelton team are flying and had another big winner at Ascot on Saturday.

KEMPTON 14.30 CHRISTMAS HURDLE

RUBY WALSH: **Buveur D'Air** is a dual Champion Hurde winner at Cheltenham and there should be nothing in this field to beat him.

MATT CHAPMAN: He's no price but bar a fall it has to be **Buveur D'Air**.

MICK FITZGERALD: **Buveur D'Air** all the way and expect him to pounce after the second last hurdle like he did against Samcro.

PADDY POWER: Boring I know but it has to be **Buveur D'Air** to keep his unbeaten run intact. If you're looking for one in the betting without market or to do a forecast, **If The Cap Fits** to chase him home.

KEMPTON 15.05 KING GEORGE VI CHASE

RUBY WALSH: **Might Bite** is a horse I've always rated highly but he was poor at Haydock. He has the ability but **Native River** always does his best. I'm split between them to name the winner but **Two For Two** could be placed at a huge price.

MATT CHAPMAN: He mightn't have his ideal conditions but at the prices I can't overlook Gold Cup hero **Native River**.

MICK FITZGERALD: I'm taking **Mite Bite** to bounce back to form and retain his King George crown.

PADDY POWER: It's very open this year but you rarely see a big shock in this race. I'm going for the grey horse, **Politologue**, and not just because it means I don't have to remember his number or what colours the jockey is wearing.