

ROYAL ASCOT

PUNDITS' PICKS OF THE DAY

DAY 5, SATURDAY JUNE 22ND



MICK FITZGERALD

PADDY POWER

JASON WEAVER

RUBY WALSH

MATT CHAMPMAN

2.30PM

CHESHAM STAKES 7F

- MF** **BEDTIME STORY** is a daughter of Frankel and was an impressive winner at Leopardstown when beating a better-fancied stablemate Giselle.
- PP** **BEDTIME STORY** looked a fine prospect when running out an easy winner first time up at Leopardstown and is bred to go to the top.
- JW** **BEDTIME STORY** wasn't the more fancied of the Aidan O'Brien stable runners on her racecourse debut at Leopardstown but is potentially very smart.
- RW** I was at Leopardstown when **BEDTIME STORY** won earlier this month on good ground as Aidan O'Brien's second string.
- MC** Godolphin have to start getting jiggy soon so I will side with **AGE OF GOLD** for William Buick and Charlie Appleby

3.05PM

HARDWICKE STAKES 7F

- MF** Last season's St Leger winner **CONTINUOUS** – who went on to finish fifth in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe – makes his seasonal debut
- PP** **CONTINUOUS** lacks a recent run but he was much improved in the second half of last year and will prove hard to beat if returning anywhere near that sort of level.
- JW** I was taken with the way **MIDDLE EARTH** finished the final quarter-mile at Newbury and the sectionals were explosive.
- RW** **MIDDLE EARTH** was behind Continuous in the St Leger last year. I'm mainly with him because he's had a run this year, whereas Continuous hasn't run since last October.
- MC** St Leger hero **CONTINUOUS** had Desert Hero and Middle Earth well beaten when landing the Classic at Doncaster.

3.45PM

QUEEN ELIZABETH II JUBILEE STAKES 6F

- MF** **BELIEVING** (each-way) will love the ground as proven when she won at Haydock a couple of weeks ago.
- PP** Archie Watson has done a fantastic job since **SHARTASH** came into his care and he's preferred to Duke of York winner Mill Stream.
- JW** **MITBAAHY** put up a personal best performance last time at the Curragh and this quicker ground is right up his street. Jamie Spencer rides.
- RW** **MITBAAHY** likes to be held up and make his move late. I was impressed with his Curragh win last time and his running style will suit the race.
- MC** It's very easy to argue that **ART POWER** (each-way) is better over 5f but this is the first time he has had fast ground in this contest and he might just bounce off it.

4.25PM

JERSEY STAKES 1M 4F

- MF** The consistent **HAATEM** deserves a break. He may get it now dropping back to 7f and has plenty of boot to get into the lead and stay there.
- PP** **RIVER TIBER** is taken to turn around Irish 2,000 Guineas form with Haatem on 3lb better terms.
- JW** **TASK FORCE** looks tailor-made for a really quick surface and added to that, he looks the natural 7f performer in this line up.
- RW** It's Haatem v **RIVER TIBER**, which is second v third in the Irish 2,000 Guineas. I'm siding with the latter as he should have improved enough to turn that form around.
- MC** **EBEN SHADDAD** (each-way) has long been my nap of the week. He'll be at fine odds here as he drops back in distance to 7f since finishing runner-up and seventh in the Craven Stakes & French 2,000 Guineas.

5.05PM

WOKINGHAM STAKES 6F

- MF** Archie Watson's **ALBASHEER** (each-way) is rated higher on all weather than he is on turf and won his first two starts this season at Newcastle.
- PP** **ALBASHEER** remains on an attractive mark despite scoring twice this term on the All Weather at Newcastle. He should find this stiff 6f right up his street.
- JW** **HARRY THREE** made an excellent return to action from a whopping 630 days away from the racecourse and will come on a bundle.
- RW** The jockey booking of Ryan Moore caught my eye on **HARRY THREE**. He had almost two years off the track before returning at Salisbury in May when finishing fourth.
- MC** **MUMS TIPPLE** (each-way) was fourth in this contest last year off a mark of 100 and runs off 96 now.

5.40PM

GOLDEN GATES STAKES HANDICAP 1M 2F

- MF** **BLACK RUN** (each-way) was a good winner of a Newmarket handicap having run in a Group 3 Classic trial in France on seasonal debut.
- PP** There was a lot to like about the way **PRIMO LARA** came clear at York last time and he's selected to defy another rise in the weights.
- JW** Everybody has latched onto **HAND OF GOD** in the market as he appears to have been let off lightly by the handicapper after his Sandown win last time.
- RW** I was with Portsmouth until he got drawn in stall three. It's a tentative pick but I'll go with **HAND OF GOD** for William Buick and Harry Charlton in stall 17.
- MC** **PORTSMOUTH** ran too free when beaten at Epsom last time but from a low draw can get tucked in and has every chance. Getting him settled will be key.

6.15PM

QUEEN ALEXANDRA STAKES 2M 5F

- MF** Joseph O'Brien saddles three runners including last year's winner **DAWN RISING**. He's finished behind Queenstown twice this season already – when Aidan O'Brien's charge was twice runner-up to Thursday's Gold Cup winner Kyprios.
- PP** The traditional Royal Ascot finale is run over the longest distance in the Flat calendar and it's **TASHKHAN** who gets the nod to come out on top.
- JW** **GRAND PROVIDENCE** never really threatened to win the Chester Cup last time but back up over this 2m 5f extreme distance she can get competitive as she has stamina in abundance.
- RW** I'm keen on **QUEENSTOWN** for Aidan O'Brien, who has finished second behind Kyprios twice this season already.
- MC** Dawn Rising had **RUN FOR OSCAR** back in third when landing this last year and there is every chance he can go in again.

PADDYPOWER. NEWS

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