

YORK EBOR '24

PUNDITS' PICKS OF THE DAY

SATURDAY AUGUST 24TH



MICK FITZGERALD

PADDY POWER

JASON WEAVER

RUBY WALSH

MATT CHAPMAN

13:50

STRENSALL STAKES

- MF** **TASK FORCE**'s run at Goodwood can be marked up a bit as he didn't have the smoothest passage behind Lead Artist. The three-year-old's weight allowance will help him against the older horses too.
- PP** Roger Varian's upwardly-mobile four-year-old **ENFJAAR** is fancied to claim his biggest win yet and add to his impressive John Smith's Cup victory here. The classic generation are well represented and Nassau runner-up See The Fire could emerge as the main danger.
- JW** **TASK FORCE** finally finished his race strongly over 7f last time at Goodwood last time. The one mile trip and speedier nature of this venue will suit him.
- RW** **ALYANAABI** was an early season fancy for the 2,000 Guineas. He hasn't scaled those heights but could be a contender in this Group 3 race, if connections held him in such high esteem.
- MC** There are question marks about a few of these but not **ENFJAAR**. He stays well, arrives in great form and has an each-way chance.

15:00

CITY OF YORK STAKES

- MF** He was second in this race last year to Kinross but **AUDIENCE** has been in better form this season and can score for the third time of asking this term for the Gosdens.
- PP** **AUDIENCE** was well placed in a modestly-run Lennox Stakes at Goodwood last month and is taken to uphold the form with Kinross, who bids to win this for a third year running.
- JW** A dual winner this season already and **AUDIENCE** has the ability to go forward and kick on in the straight and that makes it very tough for the others to close him down.
- RW** John & Thady Gosden's runner **AUDIENCE** is the best horse and most likely winner in my view. He'll jump off and go and it's up to the others to get to him and pass him!
- MC** The make up of the race looks perfect for the Lockinge winner **AUDIENCE** to score. He can settle, sit second and then pounce late like he did at Goodwood last time.

16:10

CONSTANTINE HANDICAP

- MF** The draw will be key for **ELMONJED** in stall two in the big-runner 6f sprint handicap as William Haggas tries to sign off on the final day with a winner. Two Tribes isn't far away from him in stall four and has a solid each-way chance.
- PP** A cracking sprint handicap with **BILLYJOH** just about the most persuasive option, He's stood up really well to an intensive campaign and a brace of placed efforts at Goodwood in recent weeks confirm his current mark is within range.
- JW** Oisin Murphy has decided to hit the sauna and ride **SUMMERGHAND** at 8st 8lbs. York suits, he's got an ideal low starting number in box 6 so what's not to love.
- RW** Trainer Richard Fahey should have a big chance with **DARE TO HOPE**, who has a nice low draw in stall three with Oisin Orr on board.
- MC** **ELMONJED** came good at Windsor last time and I still feel he's got more in him than he's showing. A big each-way chance.

14:25

MELROSE HANDICAP

- MF** Andrew Balding has two runners in here and Oisin Murphy has chosen to ride **WILD WAVES** over Tactician. That swings me in his favour.
- PP** Andrew Balding has a strong recent record in this so it's worth giving another chance to **WILD WAVES**, who met trouble when one of the market leaders for a valuable handicap over this trip at Haydock last month.
- JW** **CHAMPAGNE PRINCE** was very highly tried in the early part of the season and put up his best performance so far at Ascot last time when dropped back into handicap company. He now gets an extra quarter mile to stretch his legs, looks unexposed and is an improver.
- RW** **THE EQUATOR** has been catching my eye recently over middle distances and has been crying out for this 1m 6f trip. He can deliver having been the second and third string for Ballydoyle in previous races.
- MC** **TACTICIAN** could still be well handicapped and looks a progressive stayer. He's up 5lb for his last win and has a fine draw in box eight.

15:35

EBOR HANDICAP

- MF** David O'Meara has never won the Ebor Handicap but has a leading chance with **EPIC POET** after his runner-up finish behind Crystal Black at Royal Ascot over 1m 4f. Connections will hope a step up to 1m 6f will see further improvement.
- PP** A typically-competitive renewal of the most valuable Flat handicap in Europe and its **EPIC POET** who shades the vote having been shaping up well for David O'Meara this season.
- JW** **BURDETT ROAD** made his seasonal debut at Royal Ascot and blew away the cobwebs. It was a very positive display a month ago as despite getting outpaced, he hit the line strongly, suggesting this 1m 6f stamina test off a mark of 101 is going to suit him.
- RW** Willie Mullins saddles **HIPOP DE LOIRE**. He has a great chance and has improved from his run at Galway. **YASHIN** for Jessica Harrington is another who has a big chance for the Irish challengers who've had a good week.
- MC** There are real signs in his recent form that **EPIC POET** will relish this step up in distance to 1m 6f. A strong each-way chance under Danny Tudhope.

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