

# PUNDITS' PICKS OF THE DAY

THE ONES TO WATCH OUT FOR ON CHAMPION CHASE DAY - WEDNESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH



RUBY WALSH



NINA CARBERRY



FRANK HICKEY



PADDY POWER

## BALLYMORE NOVICES HURDLE

★ **Ruby Walsh:** **Samcro** is touted as a banker and, honestly, if Willie Mullins was training him and I was riding him I'd think he was a certainty too.

★ **Nina Carberry:** **Samcro** feels like a chaser, and anything he does over hurdles will be a bonus, but he definitely has the engine, and he travels.

★ **Frank:** I was at Leopardstown when **Samcro** won the Deloitte and you could feel the sense from the crowd that we were witnessing something special. Go for **Samcro**.

★ **Paddy:** What kind of madman would back against **Samcro** in this one? Not me, that's for sure.

## RSA CHASE

★ **Ruby Walsh:** **Presenting Percy** is a possible. **Monalee's** a very good horse, **Al Boum Photo** stayed well at Leopardstown behind **Monalee** and **Black Corton** has done nothing wrong.

★ **Nina Carberry:** For me, **Al Boum Photo's** a bit more value in this race than the rest.

★ **Frank:** **Al Boum Photo** looks to be Willie Mullins' best chance and we shouldn't underestimate him.

★ **Paddy:** **Monalee** and **Al Boum Photo** will be up there, but you can always trust a PP – so I'm on **Presenting Percy** here.

## CORAL CUP

★ **Ruby Walsh:** You'd want a bit of value here. It might be worth looking at **Le Breuil**.

★ **Frank:** **Le Breuil** may well be one to watch, as a mark of 139 looks to be more than fair based on his defeat of Benatar as a novice. He will do for me at an each-way price.

★ **Paddy:** The withdrawal of **Hunter's Call** from the Festival has simplified it slightly, so I'll be looking at **Max Dynamite**.

## QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE

★ **Ruby Walsh:** **Min** couldn't beat **Altior** as a novice hurdler, so has he improved enough to beat him now? I think the race is all about **Altior**.

★ **Nina Carberry:** The only horse who can beat **Altior** is **Douvan**, if he can come back to his best. But it's going to be very, very hard for him to do so.

★ **Frank:** If **Altior** runs to the level we know he can, then he will be almost impossible to beat.

★ **Paddy:** I have great affection for **Min**, but the truth is that **Altior** looks a level above the rest of the field here.

## FRED WINTER JUVENILE HANDICAP HURDLE

★ **Ruby Walsh:** I may ride a second-string of Dan Skelton's, who really fancies his first-string, **Nube Negra**, ridden by Harry Skelton.

★ **Frank:** **Oxford Blu** is a massive price here but will relish the strong pace and stiff finish here and he looks to have decent each-way claims.

★ **Paddy:** Perhaps not a race that will excite the crowds too much, but I reckon **Nube Negra** has a shot at taking this one.

## CROSS COUNTRY CHASE

★ **Ruby Walsh:** **Cause of Causes** is rock solid. He's such a great style of racing and is an economical little jumper. He'll be very, very hard to beat.

★ **Nina Carberry:** **Tiger Roll** is coming in, I think, the way that **Cause of Causes** came into it last year. So, it'll be interesting.

★ **Frank:** **Cause of Causes** will be a tough nut to crack but I expect **Tiger Roll** to go very close.

★ **Paddy:** Because, because, because... because of the wonderful things he does. **Cause of Causes** all the way here.

## WEATHERBYS CHAMPION BUMPER

★ **Ruby Walsh:** If we've got slow ground it would bring **Carefully Selected** into the reckoning. But at the minute it's **Blackbow**. Willie raved about **Hollowgraphic** but now he's gone I reckon **Blackbow** can take it.

★ **Nina Carberry:** I like **Rhinestone** in this. He hasn't done much wrong this season. You need to be battle-hardened in this race, and he is.

★ **Frank:** It is very significant that Gigginstown have sent Gordon Elliott-trained **Felix Desjy** to the race.

★ **Paddy:** Our very own Ol' Big 'Ead in the office here has a stake in **Blackbow**, and won't shut up talking about him. So who am I to argue?