

PUNDITS' PICKS

GRAND NATIONAL 2019 - AINTREE 6TH APRIL 17:15



RUBY WALSH



PADDY POWER



EMMANUEL PETIT



MATT CHAPMAN



SHANE LOWRY



MICK FITZGERALD



FRANK HICKEY

RUBY WALSH

I honestly think Willie Mullins has a great chance of winning the race this year and I've chosen to ride **Rathvinden** over last year's runner up **Pleasant Company**. Willie also has **Up For Review** and **Livelovelaugh** in the field with **Isleofhondreams** as the third reserve. Of the others, Gordon Elliott has thrown plenty of darts at the board and the pick of those outside of the reigning champ, **Tiger Roll**, could be **Jury Duty**. He was just off the top rank as a novice chaser, likes good ground and is a solid jumper.

PADDY POWER

Tiger Roll will be hard to beat in the National, but I'm sticking with **Rathvinden** to win it and I think **Minella Rocco** has a squeak at a big price.

EMMANUEL PETIT

Oh la la, c'est le Grand National. It takes a lion (or a horse) to win this race, so why not an old red one? **Vieux Lion Rouge** is what they should have nicknamed me at Arsenal. I don't know who Phil is, but if Le Gigginstown thinks he's worth their faith, then who am I to argue? I'm backing **A Toi Phil**. Maybe it's Phil Collins?

MATT CHAPMAN

Vintage Clouds has always been a classy staying handicapper, and after a wind operation ran a great race in the Ultima at Cheltenham when second to Beware the Bear. Now has his second run after that wind op and might be even better. **Pleasant Company** was beaten a head by Tiger Roll last year and has not done much since in two runs. However, will have been laid out for this race again and he clearly has every chance of going one better if in the same form as 12 months ago. **Step Back** tends to come good at the end of the season and ran well for a long way at Warwick last time. Every chance of reaching the frame as he jumps well and stays strong.

SHANE LOWRY

I don't know a huge amount about the gg's but there's a few names here I won't overlook. I can't ignore **Tiger Roll** ahead of Masters week but his price is as short as the real Tiger was in his prime. I'm all over **Just a Par** because that's exactly what

I'll be looking for on the first tee box at Augusta next Thursday in the first Major of the season.

MICK FITZGERALD

Rathvinden is one I really like to put it up to the favourite **Tiger Roll**. He's a former National Hunt Chase winner at Cheltenham so staying the 4m 2f trip should be no problem to him and was an easy winner of his last race at Fairyhouse. **Anibale Fly** finished fourth here last year and put in another brilliant run when second in the Gold Cup a month ago. **Lake View Lad** had a fantastic prep race at Cheltenham where he ran strongly to finish third in the Ultima Handicap Chase. **Vintage Clouds** was just in front of Lake View Lad at the Festival and his trainer Sue Smith told me he's in great form.

FRANK HICKEY

There's always a back-story to the Grand National winner and there's a few competing narratives this year too. **Tiger Roll** is looking to become the first consecutive Grand national winner since Red Rum in the 1970's. Champion jockey Richard Johnson has yet to win the race in his illustrious career and rides **Rock the Kasbah**. Will it be 21st time lucky for Tricky Dicky? And if you think that leading owner Trevor Hemmings can win the race for a fourth time, then his **Vintage Clouds** or **Lake View Lad** should be on your list.

