

DUBLIN RACING FESTIVAL

PUNDITS' PICKS OF THE DAY



FRANK HICKEY



RUBY WALSH



MICK FITZGERALD



MATT CHAPMAN



PADDY POWER

1.10pm

MARES H'CAP HURDLE 2M 2F

- FH** **THE GETAWAY STAR** has proven to be above average and her run behind the geldings at Tramore last time should leave her spot on for this mares race.
- RW** Willie has six runners but **TELMESOMETHINGGIRL** could be well handicapped for Henry de Bromhead and worth an each-way play.
- MF** Willie Mullins has lots of runners with chances but I like **LADY BREFFNI** who has run well in a big handicap before.
- MC** I'll have an each way punt on **RESCUE PACKAGE** for Tony Mullins and Robbie Power. He's up 7lb for a success at Punchestown last time that looks fair enough considering he won going away.
- PP** **DYSART DIAMOND** was a pretty winner on St Stephens Day at Leopardstown and can follow up.

2.10pm

GRADE 1 NOVICE HURDLE 2M

- FH** **APPRECIATE IT** has already won a Grade 1 in a decent time and will be very tough to beat.
- RW** **APPRECIATE IT** looks like the banker bet of the weekend for me. Jumps, stays and gallops.
- MF** With a Grade 1 victory to his name already **APPRECIATE IT** is very hard to look past on his way to a Supreme Novices Hurdle tilt.
- MC** **APPRECIATE IT** is a class bumper horse and will be hard to topple for Willie Mullins and Paul Townend. He romped home at Leopardstown last time and this big field going at a strong pace should suit him very well.
- PP** **APPRECIATE IT** is getting better and better and hosed up at this meeting last year. Looks banker material...for now and Cheltenham!

3.10pm

GRADE 1 FLOGAS NOVICE CHASE 3M

- FH** Monkfish should win but **JANIDIL** could be the each-way play in the field.
- RW** I fancy **MONKFISH** will be too good for this field even if he's dropping down in trip.
- MF** **MONKFISH** is another who can add to Willie Mullins' tally on Sunday. I'm a huge fan.
- MC** All eyes on **MONKFISH** here as he looks to be a real star for Willie Mullins and Paul Townend. The Albert Bartlett hero has been a natural over fences and should easily cope with a drop in trip.
- PP** Monkfish should win but I'll take a flyer on **ASTERION FORLONGE** at better odds.

1.40pm

GRADE 1 SPRING JUVENILE HURDLE 2M

- FH** Paul Townend has opted for **YOUNDOR** who looked unlucky when falling at the last hurdle on his last start at Fairyhouse. Can make amends now.
- RW** **SAINT SAM** never got the rub of the green last time and with different tactics can turn over the others.
- MF** Quilixios could be very good but hasn't run for a while. **SAINT SAM** had no luck last time and at a price can be the value alternative.
- MC** No doubt **QUILIXIOS** is the one to beat here after two facile successes at Down Royal and Punchestown. He's won those races by over 30l and could be very useful for Gordon Elliott and Jack Kennedy.
- PP** Gordon Elliott has some team of juveniles and **QUILIXIOS** won his first start two starts by wide margins.

2.40pm

HANDICAP HURDLE 3M

- FH** **DOWNTOWN GETAWAY** is an intriguing runner on his first start for Willie Mullins having switched from Nicky Henderson's stable.
- RW** The heart says Pure Genius for my dad Ted, but as an each-way option at a nice price I'll go for **LOW SUN**.
- MF** **JULIES STOWAWAY** made a bad mistake at the last at Fairyhouse which stopped her in her tracks, but she is not badly handicapped and a good each-way shot.
- MC** Trained by Jessica Harrington, **MOROSINI** wasn't disgraced at Leopardstown last time and, while he still has stamina to prove, has a good racing weight.
- PP** **UNEXPECTED DEPTH** will love the ground and ran well at Christmas here. Some others will have other targets but this could be his day.

3.40pm

PADDY POWER IRISH GOLD CUP 3M

- FH** **MINELLA INDO** had a blip when falling in the Savills Chase at this venue but really needs to be winning this to be a proper Gold Cup contender.
- RW** Paul Townend takes over on Melon but **MINELLA INDO** looks the one to beat.
- MF** **MINELLA INDO** is the most likely winner ahead of a tile at the Cheltenham Gold Cup.
- MC** **DELTA WORK** unseated last time but a small field should help his jumping. Classy on his day, conditions are perfect for a big run, and he can outstay this lot.
- PP** Although he fell at Christmas **MINELLA INDO** was never out of the first three before that and can put himself in the Cheltenham Gold Cup picture here.

4.10pm

GRADE A H'CAP CHASE 2M

- FH** **AT THE ACORN** has shown little over hurdles this season but I'll give him another chance over fences if he gets into the race as he's second reserve.
- RW** Bapaume looks to have the strongest form but the step up in trip may suit stablemate **FAN DE BLUES** and Brian Hayes.
- MF** **TREACYSENNISCORTHY** won a big handicap hurdle here last year and can do the same now over fences.
- MC** There shouldn't be much between **BAPAUME** and Farclas based on their Punchestown clash in November and at a nice price Willie Mullins' runner will do for me.
- PP** **FARCLAS** could be well handicapped after his third place in the Paddy Power Chase over Christmas. He's only seven so there could be improvement to come too.



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