

# CHELTENHAM 2021

## RUBY'S FESTIVAL FANCIES



### DAY ONE

### CHAMPION DAY, TUES MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup>

#### 1.20 SUPREME NOVICES HURDLE

**Appreciate It** looks rock solid here. He's only been beaten once, and that was by Ferny Hollow in last year's Champion Bumper I.

#### 1.55 ARKLE CHASE

It looks a three-horse race to me, with **Shishkin**, **Energumene** and **Allmankind**. **Shishkin** has the strongest form, will sit in behind and pounce.

#### 2.30 ULTIMA HANDICAP CHASE

If **Farclas** runs in this he'd have a really good chance but **Escaria Ten** could be the stable's main hope.

#### 3.05 CHAMPION HURDLE

If I was given a ride in this year's race, I would choose **Honeysuckle**. She has been better than ever this season and her performance blew me away in the Irish Champion Hurdle.

#### 3.40 MARES HURDLE

Wille Mullins has won nine of the 13 runnings of this race and **Concertista** can add to that record now. She won the Mares Novices' Hurdle here very impressively last season.

#### 4.15 BOODLES JUVENILE HANDICAP HURDLE

**Coltor** is well fancied for **Dermot Weld**. **Cabot Cliffs** from **Dan Skelton** is also well thought of, but I'm going with **Hous Gris** here for **Paul Nicholls**. **Busselton** for **Joseph O'Brien** could also come into the equation.

#### 4.50 NATIONAL HUNT CHASE

**Royale Pagaille's** performance at **Haydock** was outstanding and he should take all the beating. **Galvin** could be an alternative and has been aimed at this contest all season.

### DAY TWO

### LADIES DAY, WED MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>

#### 1.20 BALLYMORE NOVICES HURDLE

**Gaillard Du Mesnil**, **Bob Olinger** and **Bravemansgame** set the standard here. I really fancy **Bob Olinger** based on his Naas win.

#### 1.55 BROWN ADVISORY NOVICES' CHASE

**Monkfish** is the banker bet for many this week. He's been flawless all season long.

#### 2.30 CORAL CUP

I'd give **Birchdale** a fair each-way chance in this contest. He was eighth in this race last year but has had a better preparation this time and is rated 2lbs lower.

#### 3.05 QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE

I'll be bitterly disappointed if **Chacun Pour Soi** doesn't win. Same trainer, owner and jockey as **Monkfish**. **First Flow** could be value each-way.

#### 3.40 GLENFARCLAS CHASE

**Easysland** will be the one and only French winner at this year's festival.

#### 4.15 GRAND ANNUAL CHASE

He has a lot of different entries this week, but **The Shunter** is my pick if he runs here. This race is now run on the old course, which should suit those ridden up near the pace. He's a good chance of claiming the £100,000 bonus after winning at **Kelso**.

#### 4.50 CHAMPION BUMPER

**Ramillies** could be the each-way value against his two better fancied stablemates. If ridden a little more conservatively, I can see him hitting the frame.

### DAY THREE

### ST PATRICK'S THURSDAY, MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup>

#### 1.20 MARSH NOVICES' CHASE

I'm going with **Envoi Allen**. He's unbeaten and look the best we've seen for a while

#### 1.55 PERTEMPS NETWORK FINAL

I never won this race as a jockey and I don't remember having too many near misses either! **The Bosses Oscar** has been targeted at this all season, but it is a speculative pick.

#### 2.30 RYANAIR CHASE

Last year's winner **Min** can win again. He has achieved the most in his career from the others in the field.

#### 3.05 PADDY POWER STAYERS' HURDLE

With **Thyme Hill** out it's going to make **Paisley Park** a short favourite, but I'm going to go with **Sire Du Berlais**. His **Pertemps** performance last year was outstanding and he's my pick.

#### 3.40 PADDY POWER PLATE

A tricky handicap where **Fils D'oudairies** can go close for **Joseph O'Brien**. He was a good winner at **Navan** and chased home **Envoi**

#### 4.15 MARES NOVICES HURDLE

This can go the way of one of the smaller yards. I fancy **Peter Fahey's Royal Kahala**.

#### 4.50 KIM MUIR CHALLENGE CUP

**Time To Get Up** is my pick. A winner last time but his back form shows he was second to **Monkfish** in a maiden hurdle in 2019. That will do for me.

### DAY FOUR

### GOLD CUP DAY, FRI MARCH 19<sup>TH</sup>

#### 1.20 TRIUMPH HURDLE

**Zanahiyr** and recent **Adonis Hurdle** winner **Tritonic** set the standard. I really fancy **Zanahiyr** who blew me away when he beat **Saint Sam** by 14 lengths at **Fairyhouse** and again at **Leopardstown**.

#### 1.55 COUNTY HANDICAP HURDLE

**Ganapathai** looks to have a live chance. He's a novice on a rating of 140, a good jumper and is progressing. The track and the trip should suit.

#### 2.30 ALBERT BARTLETT NOVICES HURDLE

I like the way **Paul Nicholls' Barbados Buck's** has been winning his races but **N'golo** could be suited by the trip up to three miles and has a good each-way chance for **Willie Mullins**.

#### 3.05 GOLD CUP

The hand of history is on **Al Boum Photo** as he looks to emulate **Best Mate** in recent times and win his third **Gold Cup** in a row. He's been there, done that at this track and the 3m 2f trip, but you can't say that yet about **Champ** and **A Plus Tard**.

#### 3.40 FOXHUNTERS CHASE

**Billaway** had an advantage when **Patrick Mullins** was due to ride him but that's gone now. **Paul Nicholls' Bob and Co** look a viable alternative.

#### 4.15 THE MRS PADDY POWER MARES CHASE

A competitive contest for the new race on the card. There's lots of really good mares in it but I love **Elimay**. She will be really hard to beat.

#### 4.50 MARTIN PIPE HURDLE

The final race of the **Cheltenham Festival** and it can go the way of **Willie Mullins' Galopin Des Champs**. The step up to 2m 4f now should suit. He's got a great each-way chance.

### RUBY'S NAP

DAY 4: GOLD CUP  
Al Boum Photo

### RUBY'S LUCKY 15

DAY 1: SUPREME NOVICES - Appreciate It  
DAY 1: CLOSE BROTHERS - Concertista  
DAY 4: TRIMUPH HURDLE - Zanahiyr  
DAY 4: GOLD CUP - Al Boum Photo

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