



ROYAL ASCOT CHEAT SHEET

PUNDITS' PICKS FOR DAY ONE

TUESDAY, JUNE 15

TIMEFORM

MICK FITZGERALD

JASON WEAVER

FRANK HICKEY

MATT CHAPMAN



2:30PM

GROUP 1 QUEEN ANNE STAKES 1M

- TF** It is very hard to oppose **PALACE PIER** as he is miles clear on ratings. Order of Australia remains unexposed at this trip and rates the main threat.
- MF** **PALACE PIER** was very impressive in the Lockinge Stakes at Newbury on slowish ground but is every bit as effective on a fast surface.
- JW** **PALACE PIER** is head and shoulders the best runner in the line-up and Frankie Dettori can start the meeting off with a bloodless success.
- FH** Palace Pier is the one to beat but **REGAL REALITY** has good back form and is the each-way play.
- MC** I expect **PALACE PIER** to hack up for Frankie Dettori. He is arguably the best miler in the world and he should just be too good even on faster ground.

3:40PM

GROUP 1 KING'S STAND STAKES 5F

- TF** **BATTAASH** has an exemplary record when fresh and probably won't have to be at his best to win this for a second time. Winter Power is the danger.
- MF** **BATTAASH** justified the hype when winning at Royal Ascot last year and can do so again.
- JW** There is so much pace in the race, that even over 5f, stamina will surely kick in late on. July Cup winner **OXTED** can capitalise when it does.
- FH** **UBETTABELIEVEIT** beat Winter Power last season and ran a cracker when third at the Breeders' Cup. With Nigel Tinkler's yard in much better form now compared to earlier in the season, he can run a nice race at a price.
- MC** I want to back something each-way against Battaash and that will be the July Cup hero **OXTED**.

5:00PM

WOLFERTON STAKES 1M 2F

- TF** **M C MULDOON** makes plenty of appeal returning to the level after some fine runs over hurdles. Stablemate Rayapour won't be far away.
- MF** **CAPE GENTLEMAN** has won an Irish Cesarewitch on the Flat and over hurdles at Sandown. He likes decent ground and is a major player.
- JW** Mark Johnston's **LUCKY DEAL** is one of only a few who look to be well handicapped and this extreme 2m 4f distance for Flat horses will suit him.
- FH** **CAPE GENTLEMAN** was last seen on the Flat hacking up in the Irish Cesarewitch and Emmet Mullins wouldn't be sending him over were he not confident of a big run.
- MC** Last year's winner **COEUR DE LION** showed when he was a staying on fourth in the Chester Cup that he still has plenty of ability. He's got a good draw and is only 3lbs higher than when scoring last year.

6:10PM

COPPER HORSE STAKES 1M 6F H'CAP

- TF** **THRONE HALL** still has few miles on the clock and, with this longer trip expected to suit, can continue his fine recent form. On To Victory and Irish-raider Saldier are feared most.
- MF** **SALDIER** was very impressive at Listowel but has to shoulder a 4lb penalty for that win. He sets a very high standard under Ryan Moore.
- JW** A graded winner over hurdles, Willie Mullins' **SALDIER** gets in off a rating of just 103. He may have as much in hand over this field as Palace Pier has in the first.
- FH** **BRILLIANT LIGHT** was running well in Meydan in the Spring and he looks on a fair mark now. He is very appealing at an each-way price.
- MC** **SALDIER** is a Grade 1 hurdler who has every chance of scoring here off a decent mark. He really should take the world of stopping.

3:05PM

GROUP 2 COVENTRY STAKES 6F

- TF** **GISBRUN** was taking on newcomers at Newbury last month, but it's hard to find fault in a six and a half length win backed up by the clock.
- MF** I was very taken with **THE ORGANISER** who won at York and that form has been franked since. He looks a good each-way play.
- JW** **DHABAB** came from the back of the pack under hands and heels riding in the closing stages at Leicester and is open to plenty of improvement.
- FH** **THE ACROPOLIS** looked really good when winning at Listowel and can enhance Aidan O'Brien's excellent record in this race.
- MC** **GISBURN** looks an each-way play for Pat Dobbs and Richard Hannon. His Newbury form looks solid enough when he was a wide-margin winner.

4:20PM

ST JAMES'S PALACE STAKES 1M

- TF** **BATTLEGROUND** arrives here fresher than most having not had a hard race in the 2,000 Guineas at HQ. The winner Poetic Flare has the best form in the book while Lucky Vega can chase them home.
- MF** I'm willing to take a punt on **LUCKY VEGA** getting the job done after two credible runs in the English and Irish 2,000 Guineas.
- JW** **BATTLEGROUND** was a fantastic two-year-old and was arguably unlucky not to win at the Breeders' Cup last season. He hasn't hit the heights this season yet but better ground will help.
- FH** Newmarket doesn't suit **CHINDIT** and getting back to Ascot can see him reverse the 2,000 Guineas form with Poetic Flare and Lucky Vega.
- MC** **WEMBLEY** has been hopeless in two runs this season, but From a good draw I'm willing to give him another chance to prove himself.

5:35PM

ASCOT STAKES 2M 4F

- TF** **FELIX** has gone from strength to strength for Marco Botti and ran a screamer under Oisin Murphy in the Dubai Turf when last seen. Blue Cap is one to note.
- MF** **FOREST OF DEAN** has run on the all-weather a lot this spring and has performed with real credit. He handles the turf well too as his big York handicap win in 2019 proved.
- JW** He needs to rediscover the form that saw him finish third in the 2020 Newmarket Guineas, but **JUAN ELCANO** has had a wind operation and could be able to bully this field, now down in grade.
- FH** **PATRICK SARSFIELD** was running well in Group races last season and he should build on his nice reappearance at the Curragh. He is the one to beat.
- MC** I'm hoping **PATRICK SARSFIELD** will be too strong for this field as Joseph O'Brien and Tom Marquand team up in the same colours that landed them the St Leger before.

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