

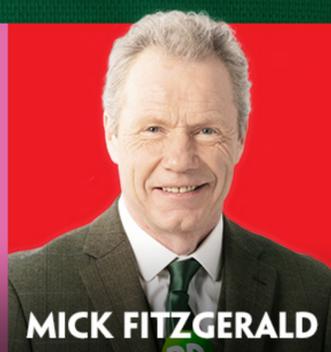
CHELTENHAM CHEAT SHEET

PUNDITS' PICKS OF THE DAY

DAY 2, WEDNESDAY MARCH 16TH



RUBY WALSH



MICK FITZGERALD



GINA BRYCE



MATT CHAPMAN



FRANK HICKEY

1.30PM

BALLYMORE NOVICES' HURDLE

- RW** **SIR GERHARD** looks in great form and I don't have any worries about the trip. It's his to lose.
- MF** A lot will depend on how much rain we get and **JOURNEY WITH ME** is a very strong stayer. Stage Star has to be respected.
- GB** The step up in trip should help last year's Champion Bumper winner **SIR GERHARD** combat the jumping issues we saw last time when winning at Leopardstown.
- MC** I can't see a shock here. **SIR GERHARD** would have had a huge chance in the Supreme for Willie Mullins and this looks easier.
- FH** It's difficult to look beyond **SIR GERHARD**. I Am Maximus might run well behind him and looks a play each-way in the without Sir Gerhard market.

2.50PM

CORAL CUP HANDICAP HURDLE

- RW** I have been sweet on **SAINT FELICIEN** since I watched him win at Gowran Park back in November. That was a taking performance. Grand Roi could be one for the places.
- MF** **GOOD RISK AT ALL** needs one to drop out to get a run but has a great chance if that happens. If it doesn't then **COMPROND** can take advantage.
- GB** **SAINT FELICIEN** looks a smart prospect. A mark of 149 for a horse once considered a Champion Hurdle prospect is too good to pass over.
- MC** I'm having a few quid each-way on **GOWEL ROAD**. He gave 14lb and a beating to Unexpected Party earlier in the season but now only has to concede 3lb to that improving rival.
- FH** **INDIGO BREEZE** has crept in at the bottom of the weights and would look nicely treated. He is my each-way play in the race.

4.10PM

GLENFARCLAS CROSS COUNTRY CHASE

- RW** The ground is the key to **TIGER ROLL'S** chances. He wins if it's good ground. Delta Work will be a danger if it rains.
- MF** I think **DELTA WORK** could spoil Tiger Roll's party and even though that would be a shame – this is Cheltenham!
- GB** **TIGER ROLL** can bring the house down with a sixth Festival win despite being 12 years old. Fellow veteran **POTTERS CORNER** can hit the places.
- MC** Time for the funny fences here in the Cross Country Chase and I'm going to risk **DIESEL D'ALLIER** each-way against the big guns on the off chance they have an off day.
- FH** **SHADY OPERATOR** has taken really well to Cross Country fences and has a decent each-way chance.

5.30PM

WEATHERBYS CHAMPION BUMPER

- RW** I've always been in the **FACILE VEGA** camp and I'm not going to jump ship now.
- MF** **FACILE VEGA** has been super impressive in his two wins and Patrick Mullins has chosen him over the stable's six other entries. American Mike looks the biggest danger.
- GB** I was Quevega's biggest fan and am thrilled that **FACILE VEGA** has inherited her brilliance. I'd be amazed if there's anything in the field to match him.
- MC** Clearly Facile Vega and American Mike both look very good but I'm chancing **JAMES'S GATE** for Willie Mullins and Sean O'Keeffe against the big two.
- FH** **REDEMPTION DAY** is very well regarded by connections and is too big a price to ignore in relation to his stablemate Facile Vega.

2.10PM

BROWN ADVISORY NOVICES CHASE

- RW** This is a wide open race. I like **L'HOMME PRESSE** and **CAPODANNO**. I have doubts over Bravemansgame and Ahoy Senor so take your pick of the first two.
- MF** If **AHOY SENOR'S** jumping holds up he will be a major player against L'Homme Presse and Bravemansgame so I'm siding with him.
- GB** **L'HOMME PRESSE** shapes as if this three mile trip is well within his compass. An impressive performance in the Dipper Chase boosted his profile and gives him the edge for me.
- MC** **BRAVEMANSGAME** has come into his own over fences and just looks a natural. Stamina does not seem an issue and he's already a Grade 1 winner this term.
- FH** **FAROUK DALENE** is underestimated in the market and the forecast of rain will really suit him.

3.30PM

QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE

- RW** This race has everything and I don't see how Energumene will overturn the Ascot form with **SHISHKIN**. Nube Negra has a chance of hitting the places at least.
- MF** He's won a Supreme Novice Hurdle and an Arkle Chase and now **SHISHKIN** can complete the treble by winning the Champion Chase.
- GB** Two-time Festival winner **SHISHKIN** can maintain his unbeaten record for the hat-trick. His defeat of Energumene at Ascot leaves me in no doubt he can do it again.
- MC** I have long banged on **SHISHKIN** to come out on top from the days he was odds against. Nothing this season has changed my mind.
- FH** Shishkin will be tough to beat but at the prices I will side with **ENERGUMENE** to reverse the form of their clash at Ascot.

4.50PM

GRAND ANNUAL HANDICAP CHASE

- RW** **POSEIDON** finished half a length behind Embittered at Killarney last August and he's 4lb better off than him now. He'll do for me.
- MF** **SKY PIRATE** can go back-to-back in the race he won last year. He's only 4lb higher in the weights and will travel sweetly in this big field.
- GB** Last year's winner **SKY PIRATE** looks primed to run another big race. He's only 4lb higher than last year and worth siding with again.
- MC** **THYME WHITE** really came good over fences at Doncaster last time and has each-way claims for Paul Nicholls and Bryony Frost. His handicap mark of 142 looks workable.
- FH** **EMBITTERED** fell when favourite for this contest last year and off a 1lb lower mark this time round, he should go well again.

PADDYPOWER. NEWS

WINGING IT SINCE 1988.