

# CHELTENHAM CHEAT SHEET

## PUNDITS' PICKS OF THE DAY

### DAY 2, WEDNESDAY MARCH 15TH



RUBY WALSH

MICK FITZGERALD

JANE MANGAN

MATT CHAPMAN

FRANK HICKEY

1.30PM

#### BALLYMORE NOVICES' HURDLE, 2M5F (GRADE 1)

- RW** I really like **IMPAIRE ET PASSE** in this 2m 5f contest. He's a really good horse and seems to have improved.
- MF** Willie Mullins has chosen to run **IMPAIRE ET PASSE** in this contest over 2m 5f and he is the one they all have to beat.
- JM** Irish trained horses have won eight of the last nine renewals of this race and I'm hopeful that positive trend can continue courtesy of **IMPAIRE ET PASSE**.
- MC** **GOOD LAND** might not be quite good enough if there is a real peach in here, but he has proven stamina and has been in great form. A solid each-way play.
- FH** The vibes are very strong for **IMPAIRE ET PASSE** since joining Willie Mullins. That will do me.

2.50PM

#### CORAL CUP HURDLE (2M5F)

- RW** **CAPTAIN CONBY** (each-way) will carry my money. The ground is against the other Mullins' horses and Icare Allen ran badly last time out.
- MF** **LANGER DAN** hasn't had much luck at Cheltenham since runner up to Galopin Des Champs in the Martin Pipe Hurdle two seasons ago. He's still well handicapped and has to have a chance.
- JM** Charles Byrnes is the handicap king and **RUN FOR OSCAR** is a very big danger from his current mark of 147 makes him a big danger in this handicap hurdle. **LANGER DAN** can hit the places.
- MC** **BEACON EDGE** has a chance to roll back the years for Noel Meade. He was once rated 158 and now runs off 147. Back him each-way.
- FH** **RUN FOR OSCAR** has scope of his hurdles mark of 147 while **WATCH HOUSE CROSS** won a decent race at Naas last November. I'll take both each-way.

4.10PM

#### CROSS COUNTRY CHASE (3M6F)

- RW** **DELTA WORK** is the one, especially with the rain that has fallen. Franco De Port is an each-way price and will stay all day.
- MF** **DELTA WORK** revelled in the soft conditions last year when beating Tiger Roll and can deny his stable-mate Galvin now.
- JM** Galvin would prefer dry conditions whereas his stablemate and last year's Grinch **DELTA WORK** will love the likely softer conditions. The booking of Keith Donoghue is a big asset.
- MC** It's very easy to stick with the defending champion **DELTA WORK** who Keith Donoghue gets the leg up on from Gordon Elliott.
- FH** **GALVIN** was fourth in the Gold Cup last season and the drier the ground the better his chance.

5.30PM

#### CHAMPION BUMPER, 2M½F (GRADE 1)

- RW** Stayers tend to win this race over the speed horses and I can see **FACT TO FILE** reversing the Leopardstown form with A Dream To Share.
- MF** There's a good back-story to **A DREAM TO SHARE** and it would be remarkable for his octogenarian trainer John Kiely if he won.
- JM** I have been extremely impressed with the filly **FUN FUN FUN**, from her performances at Sligo in October to the Dublin Racing Festival last month. Many of Mullins' champion bumper winners are not their first string.
- MC** This is a guessing game but the pin has come down on **IT'S FOR ME** for Paul Townend and Willie Mullins. Looks nippy and stays well.
- FH** **NO TIME TO WAIT**'s win at Down Royal may have gone under the radar. He's a big each-way price under Davy Russell.

2.10PM

#### BROWN ADVISORY NOVICES' CHASE, 3M½F

- RW** There is improvement to come from **GERRI COLOMBE**, so he is the one for me.
- MF** **SIR GERHARD** was an impressive winner of the Ballymore last season and made a winning debut over fences at Gowran Park. Looks a value bet.
- JM** I expect Gerri Colombe to be very difficult to beat, I fancy **THE REAL WHACKER** to go very close. He has track experience, stays extremely well and beat a decent horse when he won the Dipper Chase here.
- MC** I've long thought **THYME HILL** is a cracking each-way bet. He's got the best hurdling from in this field and if he transfers that to fences he'll be a player.
- FH** **GERRI COLOMBE** is unbeaten and will improve plenty for this test of stamina. He is my nap on the day.

3.30PM

#### CHAMPION CHASE, 2M (GRADE 1)

- RW** **EDWARDSTONE** has impressed me most this season. It should be some race as the first three from the Cheltenham Trials Day re-oppose again.
- MF** This race looks set up perfectly for **EDWARDSTONE** to travel in behind the leaders and then pounce before the final fence and stride away to the line.
- JM** A small but select field with some great records. **EDWARDSTONE** can come out on top against Energumene.
- MC** **EDWARDSTONE** might not want the ground to be too soft but he does have form with juice and is probably more reliable than Energumene who sometimes can be a weak finisher.
- FH** **EDITEUR DU GITE** is underestimated and there was no fluke about his win over Edwardstone and Energumene last time. He can confirm the form.

4.50PM

#### GRAND ANNUAL CHASE (2M)

- RW** **DINOBLUE** has a chance – that's all she has is a chance. I hope she runs well as it would be great to see Luke Dempsey ride another winner at Cheltenham.
- MF** **ELIXIR DE NUTZ** has been contesting graded races and has improved with age. He looks a good each-way bet in a competitive field.
- JM** **FINAL ORDERS** could still be well handicapped even if he's won his last seven races.
- MC** There's no doubt **THIRD TIME LUCKI** would prefer the ground to dry out as quickly as possible but he's got the ability to make a splash off a mark of 149 from 153 in his hey-day.
- FH** **BEFORE MIDNIGHT** has a fair each-way chance. An impressive winner on his sole Cheltenham start to date he has good form and is back below his last winning handicap mark. First-time cheekpieces could help too.

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