

# THE BEST OF THE FESTIVE RACING 2021

There is so much good racing at this time of year that rather than create a festival guide for just one meeting, I have decided to look at the best of what is on offer across the UK & Ireland.

The trends assessed are usually for the last 10 years albeit at this time of year meetings can be lost to the weather! The guide will start on Boxing Day and be updated daily until New Year's Day.

Favourites win rates are calculated over the last 10 years.

## DECEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>

### CATTERICK

**1.25 - 3M 1F HANDICAP CHASE (Favourites win rate 5%):** Whilst favourites have fared poorly since 2011, 2<sup>nd</sup> favourites have done better with 4/9 sent off as sole/joint 2<sup>nd</sup> favourites. The last nine winners were all 6<sup>th</sup> or better LTO (rested at least 12 days before winning here) and all were aged 7-9yo. Longest winners odds were 8/1. In the weights, all carried between 10st 2lbs & 11st 11lbs. 2020 winner *Sigurd* is now 24lbs higher in the ratings than when winning.

**2.00 – 2M 3F HANDICAP HURDLE (n/a):** New race in 2021.

### LEOPARDSTOWN

**1.10 – (Gr 1) PERTEMPS HANDICAP HURDLE OVER 3M (Favourites win rate 0%):** A hugely tricky race where 9/10 winners had double digit odds with no winning 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> favourites since 2011. All past winners carried 11st or less. 4/10 races were won by conditional jockeys.

**1.15 – (Gr 1) LEOPARDSTOWN CHRISTMAS HURDLE OVER 3M (Favourites win rate 45%):** 8/10 winners last ran at Fairyhouse in the Hattons Grace Hurdle (30 days earlier) finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> or better there. This is a race usually won by horses aged 5 or 7yo with 9/10 winners in this age group. G Elliott has 4 wins in the last 10 years and W P Mullins has 2 wins. *Flooring Porter* won the race in 2020 but has struggled so far this season.

**2.20 – (Gr 1) SAVILLS CHASE OVER 3M (Favourites win rate 15%):** To all intents this is a 'Gold Cup' trial for Irish trained horses although in the last ten years we have seen two UK trained winners. *Kemboy* (2018 winner) was also 4<sup>th</sup> in the race in 2019 and 2<sup>nd</sup> last year when behind the winner *A Plus Tard*. *Delta Work* won in 2019 and unseated in 2020. *Melon* was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the race last year and *Samcro* pulled up. Recent King George winner *Tornado Flyer* was 5<sup>th</sup> last year whilst *Minella Indo* fell in the race last year before winning the Gold Cup. Favourites have a modest strike rate here with no 2<sup>nd</sup> favourites winning since 2011 albeit all winner's odds were 11/1 or shorter. 7/10 past winners were 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> on their last run and 8/10 were aged 6 or 8yo. Multiple winners of the race are rare with *Beef Or Salmon* the last to oblige 2002/2004/2005.

**2.55 – 2M 5F BEGINNERS CHASE (Favourites win rate 50%):** The last winner of the race which also won LTO was 2011 winner *Hidden Cyclone*. With all past winners since 2011 having odds of 9/2 or shorter the Mullins second string is worth consideration given the trainers four wins in the race since 2013. 5/6yo age groups have won 8/10 races.

## LIMERICK

**2.45 – TIM DUGGAN MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE OVER 2M 4F (Favourites win rate 10%):** A valuable class B handicap which will be tricky to fathom, but at least some bookies are paying on 5 places here. Favourites have a weak 10% strike rate with only one winning 2<sup>nd</sup> favourite in the same period. 7/10 recent winners had odds of 11/1 to 20/1 so maybe best looking at e/w options. 9/10 past winners were 6<sup>th</sup> or better on their last completed race.