

THE BEST OF THE FESTIVE RACING 2023

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 27TH

CHEPSTOW

2.1 – (Gr 2) CORAL FINALE JUVENILE HURDLE OVER 2M (Favourites win rate 50%): All past winners since 2013 had odds of 6/1 or shorter. Using this criteria, the field is reduced to three horses with live chances of winning.

2.50 – CORAL WELSH GRAND NATIONAL OVER 3M 6F+ (Favourites win rate 30%): 6/10 winners had two prior runs in the season, the others running one/three/four times. 7/10 winners had odds of 9/1 or shorter, including three favourites. Two winners of the race have gone on to win Gold Cups in recent years (Synchronised & Native River).

KEMPTON

1.55 – (Gr 2) WAYWARD LAD NOVICES' CHASE OVER 2M (Favourites 30%-win rate): 7/10 past winners since 2013 also won LTO. 9/10 past winners were either 1st/2nd favourites with 4 favourites and 5 second favourites winning. 5yo have won 5/10 recent renewals.

2.30 – (Gr 2) DESRT ORCHID CHASE OVER 2M (Favourites 50%-win rate): 4/10 recent winners went on to win the Queen Mother Chase at the Festival with two of the last three winners placed in the QM Chase. When the favourite has flopped in recent times all the winners had odds of 4/1 or greater. *Nube Negra & Editeur Du Gite* are past winners – however (*Special Tiara*) was the last dual winner in 2014/2016.

LEOPARDSTOWN

1.10 – (Gr 1) PADDYS REWARDS CLUB CHASE OVER 2M 1F (Favourites 30%-win rate):

The last nine renewals have thrown up four 16/1 winners and a 9/1 winner so beware! In the last 10 years three winners also won LTO, three were 4th, two were 2nd, one was 6th and one pulled up. W P Mullins has won 4 times since 2014.

1.45 – (Gr 1) PADDY POWER FUTURE CHAMPIONS NOVICES' HURDLE OVER 2M (Favourites 40%-win rate): Willie Mullins has won six of the last eight renewals (only three started as favourites). Five of the last ten winners had also won LTO with three 2nd and two 3rd.

3.00 – PADDY POWER HANDICAP CHASE OVER 3M (Favourites 0%-win rate): With such a large field in this very valuable race punters can get up to 6 places on e/w terms with various bookies. With no winning favourite and two winning joint second favourites since 2013 it is possibly worth spreading the net a bit further. The positives to look for are horses aged 6 to 9yo; Horses carrying 11st 3lbs or

less (8/10). The main negatives to avoid are winners LTO (0/10); horses that did not finish LTO (0/10); horses making a seasonal debut (0/10); horses that have run the race before (0/10).