

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 30TH

HAYDOCK

1.25 – 3M 4F 'LAST FLING' HANDICAP CHASE (Fav 42%): This meeting is often affected by the weather so we have seen just 7 renewals in the last 10 years with three winning favourites and all but one having odds of 8/1 or shorter. All past winners since 2013 had last run 9-35 days earlier. The last six winners were all 4th or better LTO.

NEWBURY

2.25 – 3M 2F 'MANDARIN' HANDICAP CHASE (Fav 30%): A race that used to be much higher status and whose past winners included the likes of Party Politics & Jodami. The race has been run as a class 3 handicap since 2011 with 8/10 winners carrying a weight of 11st 3lbs or more. All of these winners had last run in the current season and had finished 3rd or better on their last completed race. The 2018 winner had odds of 12/1 but all the others were 10/1 or shorter.

3.00 – (Gr 1) CHALLOW NOVICES' HURDLE OVER 2M 4F+ (Fav 60%): The last 10 winners all had odds of 8/1 or shorter. 5yo have won 5/10 recent races with 6yo next best. 9/10 winners also won LTO. Recent winners of the race include *Champ*, *Thyme Hill* & *Bravemansgame*.

TAUNTON

2.10 – (LISTED) 'BYERLEY STUD' MARES NOVICES' HURDLE OVER 2M+ (Fav 55%): The last ten winners all had odds of 4/1 or shorter with 9/10 being either 1st/2nd favourites. 5yo have won 6/10 races, the other winners aged 3, 4 & 6yo. Paul Nicholls has won 4/10 races. 9/10 winners also won LTO with the other 3rd LTO. All 10 past winners last ran within 41 days of winning here.