

# THE BEST OF THE FESTIVE RACING 2024

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.

## JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>

This will be the last update in this festive format.

## CHELTENHAM

**3.15 - (Gr 2) RELKEEL HURDLE OVER 2M 4F (Fav 27%):** The profile of the winners has changed markedly since the race was moved from December to January in 2016. If we look at the last eight years in isolation, we saw two sole/joint favourites, a 4/1 winner and the rest at odds of 11/2 to 16/1. Three winners were aged 6yo and the others 7-8yo. Apart from fallers etc, all past winners since 2016 were 6<sup>th</sup> or better LTO.

**3.50 – (LISTED) 1M 6F NH FLAT RACE FOR 4YO (Fav 33%):** Well backed horses tend to fare well in this race with 7/9 winners having odds of 5/1 or shorter (including three favourites & three 2<sup>nd</sup> favourites). Apart from one horse making its debut the rest were all 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> on all starts in the current season.

## FAIRYHOUSE

**2.25 – (Gr 3) EBF MARES CHASE OVER 2M 5F (Fav 66%):** In the pre-Brexit period this race attracted a number of UK trained winners but the prize money tends to stay at home in recent years. Since 2015, all winners were either 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> LTO. When the favourites have not won we have seen one 2<sup>nd</sup> favourite winning and the others were 10/1 & 12/1 shots.

## TRAMORE

**2.15 – (Gr 3) SAVILLS CHASE OVER 2M 5F+ (Fav 61%):** The race was upgraded from Listed to Gr 3 after 2019 winner, *Al Boum Photo*, went on to win the Cheltenham Gold Cup (and went on to repeat that success here and at Cheltenham in 2020) and winning here again in 2021 & 2022. Willie Mullins now has 6 wins in the last 10 years with Paul Townend riding five of these winners. When the sole/joint favourite has not won, the winner's odds were 2/1, 7/4 & 5/1.