

Wednesday 12th March

# CHELTENHAM



**1.20** TURNERS NOVICES' HURDLE (Baring Bingham) (Grade 1) (1) 2m5f (4220 Metres)

RACE 1 **(1) FINAL DEMAND | (10) THE NEW LION | (11) THE YELLOW CLAY**

**2.00** BROWN ADVISORY NOVICES' CHASE (Broadway) (Grade 1) (1) 3m110y (4930 Metres)

RACE 2 **(1) BALLYBURN | (7) STELLAR STORY | (3) DANCING CITY**

**2.40** CORAL CUP HANDICAP HURDLE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 2m5f (4220 Metres)

RACE 3 **(17) BE AWARE | (15) COMFORT ZONE | (11) IMPOSE TOI**

**3.20** GLENFARCLAS CROSS COUNTRY CHASE (LIMITED HANDICAP) (2) 3m5f56y (5890 Metres)

RACE 4 **(1) STUMPTOWN | (2) GALVIN | (6) VANILLIER**

**4.00** BETMGM QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE (Grade 1) (1) 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)

RACE 5 **(4) JONBON | (2) ENERGUMENE | (6) MARINE NATIONALE**

**4.40** DEBENHAMS JOHNNY HENDERSON GRAND ANNUAL CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1) 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)

RACE 6 **(7) UNEXPECTED PARTY | (3) MY MATE MOZZIE | (1) JPR ONE**

**5.20** WEATHERBYS CHAMPION BUMPER (STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT) (Grade 1) (1) 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 7 **(5) GAMEOFINCHES | (1) COPACABANA | (15) BAMBINO FEVER**

## KEY TO SYMBOLS

**Top Rated:** The horse with the best chance based solely on past form, specially tailored to a 0-100 scale.

**Horses For Courses:** A suitable track for the horse, compared to its lifetime record on similar courses as defined by Timeform's course data.

**Jockey Uplift:** The engaged rider has a notably higher Timeform Jockey Ranking than those who've ridden the horse on its most recent starts

**Trainer Form:** A hot trainer to follow, based on Timeform ratings-related measurements looking at the recent performance of runners.

**1.20****TURNERS NOVICES' HURDLE (Baring Bingham) (Grade 1)**  
**(1) 4yo+ £150,000 2m5f (4220 Metres)**

RACE 1

Going: **Good to Soft**; Cross Country: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Strong****1 FINAL DEMAND (IRE) (39) (D)** **100**  
11 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**P. Townend**

Won sole outing in points and looks a hugely exciting novice hurdler having won both starts in impressive fashion, including Grade 1 at Leopardstown (22.2f, good to soft) last time. Top-class prospect who's open to oddsles more improvement.

**2 FORTY COATS (IRE) (53) (BF)** **85**  
1-222 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

**D. J. O'Keefe**

Successful in his sole bumper and fairly useful form when runner-up all 3 starts in maiden hurdles, including when going down narrowly in 4-runner event at Navan (20f) on most recent outing. Very hard to make a case for at this level, though.

**3 KAID D'AUTHIE (FR) (38)** **90**  
5/F14 5 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**B. Hayes**

Gained compensation for his Navan mishap (fell fifth) when winning a Punchestown maiden (19.8f) under a hands-and-heels ride in December. Still in need of the experience hiked in class when only fifth of 10 there last time and remains with potential up in trip.

**4 KAPPA JY PYKE (FR) (59)** **87**  
1-21 5 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**S. F. O'Keefe**

French bumper winner for D. Satalia who confirmed the promise of his hurdling/stable debut when winning 21-runner maiden at Punchestown (16.9f) in January, around a length up when left clear last. Has a lot more on his plate now, but open to further improvement.

**5 KEL HISTOIRE (FR) (59)** **88**  
1-12 5 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**M. P. Walsh**

Successful on sole outing in bumpers for Alain Couetil and made a smooth transition to hurdling when running out an easy winner of a Cork maiden (16.2f) 13 months later. Shaped well in defeat in Grade 2 Moscow Flyer at Punchestown subsequently and open to further improvement.

**6 KISS WILL (FR) (55)** **85**  
2-1 5 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**Mr P. W. Mullins**

Runner-up sole outing in bumpers in France for Francois Nicolle and created a huge impression starting out for powerful connections when making all in 13-runner maiden at Fairyhouse (16.2f) 16 months on. This is a big step up but looks sure to go on to better things.

**7 POTTERS CHARM (IRE) (46) (CD, BF)** **95**  
1-11112 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

Nigel Twiston-Davies

**Sam Twiston-Davies**

Won sole outing in bumpers and first 4 starts over hurdles, including Grade 1 Formby Novices' Hurdle at Aintree (17f, soft) in December. Possibly found fifth run in 4 months one too many when no match for reopposing Sixmilebridge on most recent outing and better judged on previous form. Tongue tied.

**8 SIXMILEBRIDGE (IRE) (46) (C, D)** **96**  
10-2111 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

Fergal O'Brien

**Kielan Woods**

£100,000 buy after finishing runner-up completed start in Irish points and looked above average in bumpers. Failed to justify favouritism on 2m Stratford hurdle debut but has won all 3 starts since, showing marked improvement in Grade 2 here (20.2f) last month. Likely to go on improving.

**9 SUPERSUNDAE (FR) (39) (D)** **93**  
2/7-12P 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**D. E. Mullins**

Completed a simple task back down from Grade 1 company at Ballinrobe in May and ran well when 8 lengths second of 8 to The Yellow Clay in Lawlor's of Naas Novices' Hurdle at Naas (20f, heavy) 8 months on. However, was pulled up in Grade 1 won by Final Demand on most recent outing. Hard to fancy.

**10 THE NEW LION (74) (D)** **97**  
1-111 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

Dan Skelton

**Harry Skelton**

Bred to stay well but showed no shortage of speed when winning a Market Rasen bumper on debut in April and has gone from strength to strength over hurdles, maintaining his unbeaten record with a most striking success in Grade 1 Challow at Newbury on most recent outing. Top-class prospect.

**11 THE YELLOW CLAY (IRE) (66)** **99**  
1/46-21111 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**J. W. Kennedy**

Smart in bumpers and has already reached a similar level over hurdles, completing 4-timer in Grade 1 Lawlor's of Naas Novices' Hurdle (20f, heavy) in January. That performance is supported by the timefigure and he's open to even more improvement.

11 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**2-1** Final Demand, **9-4** The New Lion, **6-1** The Yellow Clay, **14-1** Sixmilebridge, **16-1** Potters Charm, **22-1** Kiss Will, **25-1** Kaid D'authie, **28-1** Kel Histoire, **40-1** bar

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

A thrilling renewal of this Grade 1 featuring 6 for Mullins and a clash between the potentially top-class pair FINAL DEMAND and The New Lion. The latter was bought by JP McManus for an undisclosed sum after a most striking success in the Challow at Newbury, but it was a performance more about style than substance, whereas the former's wide-margin win at Leopardstown is very much supported by the timefigure, which sways the vote in his favour. The Yellow Clay is also worthy of plenty of respect.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:****1. FINAL DEMAND 2. THE NEW LION 3. THE YELLOW CLAY****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2024	<b>Ballyburn</b> 6-11-7	1-2f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	7
2023	<b>Impaire Et Passe</b> 5-11-7	5-2	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	10
2022	<b>Sir Gerhard</b> 7-11-7	8-11f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	9
2021	<b>Bob Olinger</b> 6-11-7	6-4f	Henry de Bromhead	Rachael Blackmore	7
2020	<b>Envoi Allen</b> 6-11-7	4-7f	Gordon Elliott	Davy Russell	12

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**2.00****BROWN ADVISORY NOVICES' CHASE (Broadway) (Grade 1)  
(1) 5yo+ £200,000 3m110y (4930 Metres)**

RACE 2

Going: **Good to Soft**; Cross Country: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Even**

**1 BALLYBURN (IRE) (38) (C)** **100**  
2111-1121 7 11-7 | 73.0kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**P. Townend**

Leading novice hurdler of 2023/24, the second of his 3 Grade 1 victories coming at the Festival 12 months ago. No match for Sir Gino on second chase try at Kempton but suited by return to further when winning Leopardstown Gr 1 (21.5f) 38 days ago. Step up to 3m can unlock further progress.

**2 BETTER DAYS AHEAD (IRE) (31) (C)** t **96**  
1421-3121 7 11-7 | 73.0kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**J. W. Kennedy**

Last season's Martin Pipe winner who made it 2 wins from 3 chase starts when just holding on from stablemate Stellar Story in Grade 2 Ten Up Novices' Chase at Navan (23.8f) 31 days ago. This demands more but he's a likeable sort and respected.

**3 DANCING CITY (FR) (45) (D)** **94**  
51131-111 8 11-7 | 73.0kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**D. E. Mullins**

Leading staying novice hurdler (3-time Grade 1 winner) last season. Picked up where he left off when landing Punchestown maiden chase (23.3f) in December and followed up in Naas Grade 3 with the minimum of fuss a month later. Well worth his place in this company.

**4 GORGEOUS TOM (IRE) (101)** **95**  
21-101F14 7 11-7 | 73.0kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

**D. J. O'Keeffe**

Positive profile over hurdles and progressive over fences, his second success coming in a Cork Grade 3 (20f) in November. Noted finishing to very good effect when close-up fourth in the Drinmore at Fairyhouse (20f) in December and step up to 3m may see him in an even better light.

**5 LECKY WATSON (IRE) (59)** **95**  
5/1235-511 7 11-7 | 73.0kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**S. F. O'Keeffe**

Placed at Grade 1 level over hurdles and made perfect start over fences this winter, taking rise in class in his stride when making it 2-2 in Punchestown Grade 3 (19.4f, heavy) 2 months ago. Steps back up in trip here and unlikely we've seen best of him yet in this sphere.

**6 QUAI DE BOURBON (FR) (48)** **94**  
P4/1131-31 6 11-7 | 73.0kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**Mr P. W. Mullins**

Won all 3 starts as a novice hurdler either side of an excellent third behind Better Days Ahead in last season's Martin Pipe. Taken well to chasing, building on his reappearance effort when landing 14-runner Gowran maiden (20f) 7 weeks ago. Likely to progress further faced with this stiffer test.

**7 STELLAR STORY (IRE) (31) (C, D)** s **97**  
3241-4142 8 11-7 | 73.0kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**Danny Gilligan**

Smart hurdler who landed last season's Albert Bartlett and similar form over fences, best effort yet when neck second behind Better Days Ahead in Grade 2 at Navan 31 days ago, just failing. Fact he's prone to mistakes is a concern but possibilities nevertheless.

7 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**6-5** Ballyburn, **9-2** Dancing City, **13-2** Better Days Ahead, **12-1** Stellar Story, **12-1** Gorgeous Tom, **14-1** Lecky Watson, **18-1** Quai De Bourbon

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

Last season's leading novice hurdler, BALLYBURN has done little to alter the fact he's a top prospect in this sphere, impressing with his strength at the finish when successful in Grade 1 company at Leopardstown (21.5f) 38 days ago. It's feasible to think the step up to 3m can see him in an even better light and he makes plenty of appeal. Stellar Story, who landed last year's Albert Bartlett, appeals at longer odds provided he keeps the errors at bay. Dancing City is another to note.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

**1. BALLYBURN 2. STELLAR STORY 3. DANCING CITY**

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2024	<b>Fact To File</b> 7-11-7	8-13f	W. P. Mullins	M. P. Walsh	6
2023	<b>The Real Whacker</b> 7-11-7	8-1	Patrick Neville	Sam Twiston-Davies	10
2022	<b>L'Homme Presse</b> 7-11-4	9-4f	Venetia Williams	Charlie Deutsch	9
2021	<b>Monkfish</b> 7-11-4	1-4f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	6
2020	<b>Champ</b> 8-11-4	4-1	Nicky Henderson	Barry Geraghty	10

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**2.40****CORAL CUP HANDICAP HURDLE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1)**  
**4yo+ £110,000 2m5f (4220 Metres)**

RACE 3

**GBI RACING**Going: **Good to Soft**; Cross Country: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Strong****1 MAXXUM (IRE) (31)** **97**  
F-1P84461 8 12-0 | 76.2kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**Carl Millar (5lb/2kg)**

Right at home in big-field handicap hurdles and wasted no time getting back on track to record a first success in graded company at Navan over this trip last month. Good record under this young conditional and part of a strong hand for top yard. One to consider.

**2 BALLYADAM (IRE) (71)** **98**  
5/213327-1 10 11-12 | 75.3kg

Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

**Rachael Blackmore**

Good record at the Festival, second in this race last season, while he didn't need to be at his best to win for the first time over hurdles in more than 4 years on his comeback at Punchestown on New Year's Eve. Clearly put away for this and a big run is likely.

**3 EAGLE FANG (IRE) (81)** **97**  
3010-1237 5 11-8 | 73.5kg

William Durkan, Ireland

**Oakley Brown (5lb/2kg)**

Smart winning hurdler who took a Punchestown novice under this rider in May and hasn't been disgraced since, fading in the Long Walk when last seen in December. Well held when gambled on in the Fred Winter last year but could fare better now.

**4 SANDOR CLEGANE (IRE) (48)** **96**  
4224-4244 8 11-8 | 73.5kg

Paul Nolan, Ireland

**S. F. O'Keefe**

Enjoyed a fine novice hurdle campaign in 2022/23, finishing third in the Albert Bartlett, and back on track over the smaller obstacles this term without totally convincing with his attitude. Makes handicap debut now and this scenario should suit. Wouldn't rule out.

**5 COLONEL MUSTARD (FR) (92)** (BF) **98**  
2525-3232 10 11-7 | 73.0kg

Mrs Lorna Fowler, Ireland

**Tiernan Power Roche (5lb/2kg)**

Smart but on a long losing run. Does tend to go well in big fields though, one of his best efforts coming when third in the County here in 2022 off 140. Probably vulnerable to younger legs now but wouldn't rule out a good showing under excellent conditional.

**6 JIMMY DU SEUIL (FR) (313)** **96**  
52/2124-5 6 11-7 | 73.0kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**D. E. Mullins**

Landed short odds in a Clonmel maiden hurdle last season before finishing 13 lengths second behind Ballyburn in the Baring Bingham here. Seen just twice after, finishing well held, but arrives fresh for handicap debut and this might have been the plan all along. One to note.

**7 SA FUREUR (IRE) (73)** (D, BF) **92**  
P/F124-210 8 11-6 | 72.6kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**J. W. Kennedy**

Well handicapped on his very smart chase form (fourth in last season's Grand Annual and also took valuable Navan contest in December). Disappointing when well backed in Leopardstown handicap won by Al Gasparo back hurdling at Leopardstown at Christmas, though.

**8 BEACON EDGE (IRE) (25)** (D) **98**  
24513724 11 11-6 | 72.6kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**Danny Gilligan**

A regular at this meeting, fourth in the 2021 Stayers' for Noel Meade, although he's finished well held in this the last 2 years. Couple of respectable runs over inadequate trips the last twice and should be closer to his best now.

**9 AL GASPARO (FR) (73)** **96**  
42-153101 6 11-5 | 72.1kg

Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland

**Keith Donoghue**

Big improver in just his second season hurdling, making all and jumping well when landing listed Leopardstown handicap from a number of today's rivals in December. Won't be able to dominate in quite the same fashion here but he's hard to dismiss.

**10 STAFFORDSHIRE KNOT (IRE) (48)** **98**  
122-P2650 7 11-4 | 71.7kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**Sam Ewing**

Maiden hurdle winner who was held in second by Brighterdaysahead in Grade 1 at Aintree last season and back on track in this sphere when fifth in 3m Leopardstown handicap at Christmas. Sour display at Huntingdon since though, jumping/travelling poorly, and blinkers go on now.

**11 IMPOSE TOI (FR) (102)** (C, D) **96**  
212/1123-1 7 11-2 | 70.8kg

Nicky Henderson

**Nico de Boinville**

Went the right way in a brief spell last season, his 2 victories including one at this venue, and picked up where he left off returning from an 11-month absence when scoring at Newbury in November. Good record fresh and with cheekpieces on can go well for yard that won it in 2019 and 2020.

**12 BECKETT ROCK (IRE) (18)** **98**  
1-4102 6 11-1 | 70.3kg

Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

**D. J. O'Keefe**

Won 2 of his first 3 starts over hurdles and firmly back on track upped in trip when second in big-field Fairyhouse handicap last month, finishing strongly. Having just his sixth run here and might be found wanting for experience.

**13 BUNTING (FR) (56)** (BF) **97**  
147-92 5 11-0 | 69.9kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**P. Townend**

Useful sort who returned to something like his juvenile form back from 8 months off when second to Beckett Rock at Clonmel 8 weeks ago, rallying after losing lead when stumbling on landing 3 out (nearly unseated). Longer trip should suit and 1 of 3 darts for top yard. Has been backed in recent days.

**14 KING ALEXANDER (IRE) (39)** **98**  
1/1F17-819 7 10-12 | 68.9kg

W. P. Mullins, Ireland

**B. Hayes**

Useful handicap hurdler who made a successful start for Willie Mullins in 3m Fairyhouse event in January. Struggled faced with a much more competitive scenario at Leopardstown next time though and this is hardly any easier. Others from yard are more appealing.

**15 COMFORT ZONE (IRE) (73)** (C) **98**  
11/0-77633 6 10-12 | 68.9kg

Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland

**M. P. Walsh**

Won the Triumph Trial on his only other run here in January 2023 and having taken a big-field Flat handicap in the autumn he ran a screamer behind Al Gasparo in a valuable Leopardstown handicap hurdle at Christmas. Presumably saved for this since and looks a danger to all.

**16 MIGHT I (IRE) (53)** **97**  
1306-6164 9 10-12 | 68.9kg

Harry Fry

**Sean Bowen**

Fourth in the Martin Pipe here 2 years ago and capitalised on a falling mark to score at Bangor in November. Not so good twice since but still on a favourable mark if he's on a going day in re-fitted cheekpieces.

**17 BE AWARE (FR) (81)** **100**  
1222-23 6 10-12 | 68.9kg

Dan Skelton

**Harry Skelton**

Progressive hurdler who has been performing well in big-field handicaps, going down narrowly behind Burdett Road in the Greatwood here on return before shaping better than the distance beaten suggests in warm 2m Ascot event at Christmas (hampered last). Big run expected back up in trip.

**18 SAMUI (38)** **96**  
41594-017 6 10-11 | 68.5kg

Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**Jordan Colin Gainford**

Smart performer on the Flat who produced best effort to date over hurdles when landing 2m Thurles handicap in January. Easy to back and not so good at Musselburgh next time but can bounce back over this shorter trip.

**19 ANNA BUNINA (FR) (18)** **94**  
7-038528P 9 10-11 | 68.5kg

John McConnell, Ireland

**Harry Cobden**

Making her fifth Festival appearance and has been a fine servant, but her consistency isn't what it was and she ran poorly in first-time cheekpieces (off now) at Chepstow 3 weeks ago. Cobden booked but stable quiet and would be a surprise winner.

**20 LOSSIEMOUTH (18)** **98**  
446 10 10-8 | 67.1kg

Polly Gundry

**Stan Sheppard**

Three-time hurdle winner for Tom Lacey at the end of 2021 before long absence, but has shown he retains most of his ability in 3m handicaps this season. This is a whole different ball game, however.

**2.40****CORAL CUP HANDICAP HURDLE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1)**  
**4yo+ £110,000 2m5f (4220 Metres)**

RACE 3



**21** **CAPTAIN MORGS (IRE) (116)** (C) **96**  
42PP-14P0 9 10-8 | 67.1kg  
Nicky Henderson *Sam Twiston-Davies*  
3m handicap hurdle winner here in December 2022 but perennially more miss than hit now, a return to hurdling not rekindling him here when last seen in November. Has dropped in the weights and leading yard struck with a big-priced winner in this in 2019 but he's hard to fancy.

**22** **MINELLA MISSILE (IRE) (18)** (CD) **98**  
11-9PP 7 10-8 | 67.1kg  
Evan Williams *Adam Wedge*  
A promising novice hurdler (won Grade 2 over C&D at the November meeting in 2023) but had problems since, missing last term, while this season has been a write-off so far, quickly beaten at Chepstow recently. Needs a huge revival.

**23** **VISCHIO (IRE) (11)** **98**  
84P24117 8 10-8 | 67.1kg  
Emmet Mullins, Ireland *Donagh Meyler*  
Big improver for new trainer in first-time hood/tongue tie when taking a valuable mares' handicap hurdle at the Dublin Racing Festival last month. Easy to back and not seen to best effect in the Morebattle at Kelso a fortnight ago and could be closer to form up in trip now. Interesting.

**24** **BEAT THE BAT (IRE) (32)** **99**  
10/212-275 7 10-8 | 67.1kg  
Harry Fry *Bryan Carver*  
Bumper winner who quickly made up into a very useful hurdler last season, chasing home Dysart Enos in novice here, and has made a solid start in handicaps this term. Been crying out for this sort of test and he could surprise a few.

**25** **JIPCOT (FR) (25)** (D, BF) **99**  
313-78134 6 10-6 | 66.2kg  
Jonjo & A.J. O'Neill *Kielan Woods*  
Back to very best following wind surgery when winning readily at Newbury over this trip before excellent efforts tackling 3m in good events at Windsor and Haydock. Drop back in distance will suit and he's not without interest.

**26** **IKE SPORT (FR) (11)** **98**  
R1-34F5P4 7 10-6 | 66.2kg  
Neil Mulholland *Conor O'Farrell*  
Developed into a useful hurdler last season, winning 3 times at around 2½m. Bit quiet this term, although his recent Doncaster effort was a step back in the right direction and return to this trip will be in his favour.

**RESERVES**

**27** **CLASSIC KING (IRE) (25)** **98**  
F2-U81U13 7 10-6 | 66.2kg  
Emma Lavelle *Reserve*  
Successful in handicap chase at Doncaster in November and back in good form over hurdles the last twice, finishing strongly at Ascot last time. This will be by far his toughest assignment to date. RESERVE.

**28** **SAINT ANAPOLINO (FR) (18)** (D) **97**  
52-23111 6 10-5 | 65.8kg  
Philip Hobbs & Johnson White *Reserve*  
Going from strength to strength over hurdles, completing hat-trick in pretty good Kempton handicap over this trip last month. Yard went close in this in 2023 and no surprise if he has more to offer but concerning that he jumped markedly right on his only other go on a left-handed track. RESERVE.

26 DECLARED RUNNERS (2 RESERVES)

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**15-2** Be Aware, **17-2** Impose Toi, **9-1** Comfort Zone, **10-1** Bunting, **16-1** Ballyadam, **20-1** Al Gasparo, **20-1** Jimmy Du Seuil, **22-1** Vischio, **22-1** Beckett Rock, **25-1** Maxxum, **25-1** Sandor Clegane, **28-1** Beat The Bat, **28-1** Colonel Mustard, **33-1** Jipcot, **33-1** Might I, **40-1** bar

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

BE AWARE has held his own in some hot handicaps, catching the eye at Ascot at Christmas. The return to this sort of trip will suit and he can give Dan Skelton, the best in Britain at readying one for the Festival these days, a third win in a row in the Coral Cup. An extensive shortlist also includes Comfort Zone and Impose Toi for J.P. McManus, last year's second Ballyadam, and Bunting. Harry Fry's Beat The Bat is another to note at bigger odds.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

1. BE AWARE 2. COMFORT ZONE 3. IMPOSE TOI

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2024	<b>Langer Dan</b> 8-11-8	13-2	Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton	21
2023	<b>Langer Dan</b> 7-11-4	9-1	Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton	26
2022	<b>Commander of Fleet</b> 8-11-10	50-1	Gordon Elliott	S. Fitzgerald (5)	23
2021	<b>Heaven Help Us</b> 7-10-9	33-1	Paul Hennessy	R. J. Condon (7)	26
2020	<b>Dame de Compagnie</b> 7-10-12	5-1f	Nicky Henderson	Barry Geraghty	25

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race


















**3.20****GLENFARCLAS CROSS COUNTRY CHASE (LIMITED HANDICAP)  
(2) 5yo+ £75,000 3m5f56y (5890 Metres)**













RACE 4

**GBI RACING**Going: **Good to Soft; Cross Country: Good to Soft (Good in places)**


Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Even**

	<b>1</b>	<b>STUMPTOWN (IRE) (89)</b> (CD)	s		<b>97</b>
		P1P3-U111 8 11-10   74.4kg			
		Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland			<b>Keith Donoghue</b>
		Unseated rider on cross-country debut at Punchestown last spring but has won all 3 subsequent starts in this sphere, most recently proving a length too strong for Mister Coffey over C&D in December. Up 8 lb but he did it cosily and possesses strong credentials for this test. Cheekpieces on.			
	<b>2</b>	<b>GALVIN (IRE) (144)</b> (C, BF)			<b>100</b>
		62U/8544-2 11 11-7   73.0kg			
		Gordon Elliott, Ireland 			<b>J. W. Kennedy</b>
		Very smart chaser who boasts a good Cheltenham record, which includes a fine second in the 2023 renewal of this. Fourth in the Grand National on the second of his 2 starts of a light campaign last season and went close in a Grade 1 hurdle in the US on latest start in October. Major player.			
	<b>3</b>	<b>COKO BEACH (FR) (37)</b>	b		<b>95</b>
		10-3U5002 10 11-3   71.2kg			
		Gordon Elliott, Ireland 			<b>Sam Ewing</b>
		Produced much his best effort of this season so far when chasing home Vanillier at Punchestown (24.9f, soft) last month. However, he was beaten 18 lengths by the winner and it's unlikely that a 7 lb swing will be enough to see him reverse those placings here.			
	<b>4</b>	<b>IWILLDOIT (53)</b> (D)			<b>99</b>
		15/2335-32 12 11-3   71.2kg			
		Sam Thomas 			<b>Dylan Johnston (3lb/1kg)</b>
		Welsh National winner in 2021 and this veteran has finished in the money in the last 2 renewals of that valuable marathon. Did nothing wrong when runner-up in a Grade 3 Haydock handicap (25.6f, soft) last time and he appeals as the type who will take to this idiosyncratic course. Considered.			
	<b>5</b>	<b>FRENCH DYNAMITE (FR) (18)</b>	s+t		<b>95</b>
		47021655 10 11-3   71.2kg			
		M. F. Morris, Ireland			<b>Gavin Peter Brouder (3lb/1kg)</b>
		Smart chaser at his best and resumed winning ways in a Punchestown Grade 3 in October. Not so good next 3 appearances, though, and his shortcomings in the jumping department could be exposed now tackling these fences for the first time.			
	<b>6</b>	<b>VANILLIER (FR) (37)</b> (C)	b+t		<b>99</b>
		5020-P691 10 11-0   69.9kg			
		Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland			<b>Sean Flanagan</b>
		Below par first 3 starts of this season, including twice in races won by stablemate Stumptown, but the fitting of blinkers appeared to spark new life into this 10-y-o at Punchestown (24.9f, soft) where he landed a cross-country event in fine style. Will be a danger to all if able to build on that.			
	<b>7</b>	<b>MINELLA CROONER (IRE) (35)</b>	s		<b>97</b>
		33PP-1P65 9 10-13   69.4kg			
		Gordon Elliott, Ireland 			<b>Jordan Colin Gainford</b>
		Returned to form from out of the blue when narrowly winning the Pat Taaffe Chase at the Punchestown Festival last spring. Reproduction of that effort would put him in the picture but he's none too reliable and has offered little in 3 starts so far this season. Cheekpieces reapplied.			
	<b>8</b>	<b>ROI MAGE (FR) (121)</b>			<b>92</b>
		7/1629-215 13 10-12   68.9kg			
		Patrick Griffin, Ireland			<b>James Reveley</b>
		Got the better of Sweet David (subsequent winner over this C&D) in a listed cross-country race at Craon in France in September. Wasn't at his best in a similar contest won by Iceo Madrik at Compiègne when last seen 4 months ago, though, and this 13-y-o looks vulnerable.			
	<b>9</b>	<b>LATENIGHTPASS (53)</b> (CD)			<b>96</b>
		4/2150-03U 12 10-11   68.5kg			
		Tom Ellis			<b>Miss Gina Andrews</b>
		2022 Foxhunters winner at Aintree and clearly likes it round here, with his form figures over this C&D reading 213. Solid third to Stumptown and Mister Coffey on latest visit here in December and now meets the winner on 8 lb better terms. Strong each-way chance.			

	<b>10</b>	<b>CHEMICAL ENERGY (IRE) (37)</b> (C)	s		<b>98</b>
		6P-5P3P04 9 10-10   68.0kg			
		Gordon Elliott, Ireland 			<b>Danny Gilligan</b>
		Novice chase winner here in October 2022 and went on to run a fine race in defeat when second in the National Hunt Challenge Cup at this meeting later that season. However, he's been more miss than hit since and has a mountain to climb judged on efforts in cross-country events the last twice.			
	<b>11</b>	<b>MISTER COFFEY (FR) (89)</b>			<b>95</b>
		38/4263-22 10 10-10   68.0kg			
		Nicky Henderson			<b>Nico de Boinville</b>
		Hard to believe that he's still without a win over fences given the number of solid performances he's delivered (runner-up 8 times and third on 3 occasions from 15 starts in this sphere). Beaten just a length by Stumptown over C&D last time and looks a key player now 5 lb better off with that rival.			
	<b>12</b>	<b>BUSSELTON (FR) (31)</b>	b		<b>98</b>
		46PP-0664 8 10-5   65.8kg			
		Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland			<b>J. J. Slevin</b>
		Fairly useful chaser who performed with credit on his second run over these obstacles when sixth of 15 in C&D contest won by Stumptown in December. Ran about as well as could've been expected in the Boyne Hurdle at Navan last time and this looks like a more palatable assignment. Blinkers reapplied.			
	<b>13</b>	<b>GEVREY (FR) (37)</b>	s		<b>90</b>
		3P1PPP-09 9 10-5   65.8kg			
		Gordon Elliott, Ireland 			<b>Jake Coen (3lb/1kg)</b>
		It's been a struggle since he last got his head in front at Limerick in October 2023 and he looks an easy swerve on recent exploits.			
	<b>14</b>	<b>THE GOFFER (IRE) (37)</b>	t		<b>99</b>
		50-PDP775 8 10-4   65.3kg			
		Gordon Elliott, Ireland 			<b>Sean Bowen</b>
		Good fourth in the Ultima at this meeting in 2023 and wasn't disgraced when fifth of 21 in last season's renewal of the same race. Only mid-field in C&D contest won by Stumptown in December, though, and was again safely held on his second run on a cross-country course at Punchestown last month.			
	<b>15</b>	<b>ESCARIA TEN (FR) (39)</b>	s		<b>96</b>
		7P/6P0-P44 11 10-2(10-1)   64.4kg (64.0kg)			
		Martin Keighley			<b>James Best</b>
		Very useful chaser in his pomp and returned to form for his current yard when fourth of 15 in C&D contest won by Stumptown in December. Proved that to be no flash in the pan when again fourth back over conventional fences at Sandown since but he looks vulnerable for win purposes, nevertheless.			
	<b>16</b>	<b>CHAMBARD (FR) (30)</b> (C)	s		<b>91</b>
		21P88-PP7 13 10-2(9-13)   64.4kg (63.0kg)			
		Venetia Williams			<b>Miss Lucy Turner (5lb/2kg)</b>
		Won the Kim Muir at this meeting in 2022 but ended last season on a downer and hasn't shown much in a handful of appearances since returning to action in December. Cheekpieces back on.			

**RESERVES**

	<b>17</b>	<b>SLIPWAY (IRE) (33)</b>			<b>94</b>
		9010-5591 10 10-2(9-13)   64.4kg (63.0kg)			
		Ben Pauling 			<b>Reserve</b>
		Useful chaser when on-song. Well held first 3 starts of present campaign but, following another round of wind surgery, he got his head back in front with a game front-running display in a Kempton novice hurdle (21f, soft) last time. Could feature if getting a run back chasing. RESERVE.			
	<b>18</b>	<b>ICEO MADRIK (FR) (25)</b>	t		<b>97</b>
		422F11U5 7 10-2(9-11)   64.4kg (62.1kg)			
		David Cottin, France			<b>Reserve</b>
		French chaser who landed a pair of cross-country races at Compiègne during the autumn before unseating early in C&D contest won by Stumptown in December. Trip too sharp when fifth at Auteuil (21.9f, heavy) last time but he's one to be interested in given this more suitable scenario. RESERVE.			

16 DECLARED RUNNERS (2 RESERVES)

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**3-1** Stumptown, **5-1** Galvin, **8-1** Busselton, **17-2** Mister Coffey, **10-1** Vanillier, **18-1** Latenightpass, **20-1** The Goffer, **20-1** Iwilldoit, **25-1** Coko Beach, **33-1** Chemical Energy, **33-1** Roi Mage, **50-1** bar

**3.20****GLENFARCLAS CROSS COUNTRY CHASE (LIMITED HANDICAP)  
(2) 5yo+ £75,000 3m5f56y (5890 Metres)**

RACE 4

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

The return as a handicap following a 10-year hiatus and the Irish look set to continue their dominance, top-weight STUMPTOWN selected to extend his winning sequence to 4 having gone unbeaten in this discipline since unseating his rider on cross-country debut at Punchestown last spring. Gavin Cromwell's 8-y-o is unlikely to have it all his own way however, with former Grade 1 winner Galvin heading up the dangers, which also include Vanillier, Mister Coffey and Latenightpass.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:****1. STUMPTOWN 2. GALVIN 3. VANILLIER****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2023	<b>Delta Work</b> 10-11-7	11-10f	Gordon Elliott	Keith Donoghue	16
2022	<b>Delta Work</b> 9-11-4	5-2f	Gordon Elliott	J.W. Kennedy	16
2021	<b>Tiger Roll</b> 11-11-4	9-2	Mrs Denise Foster	Keith Donoghue	13
2020	<b>Easysland</b> 6-11-4	3-1	David Cottin	Jonathan Plouganou	14

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**4.00**

**BETMGM QUEEN MOTHER CHAMPION CHASE (Grade 1) (1)  
5yo+ £400,000 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)**

RACE 5



Going: **Good to Soft; Cross Country: Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Strong**

**1 CAPTAIN GUINNESS (IRE) (38) (CD) 82**  
1P31-2P56 10 11-10 | 74.4kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland **Rachael Blackmore**  
Second to Energumene in this in 2023 and enjoyed his finest hour when going one better 12 months ago. Long way below that form in 3 runs this season however and has his work cut out.

**2 ENERGUMENE (FR) (53) (CD) 95**  
11311/12 11 11-10 | 74.4kg



W. P. Mullins, Ireland **P. Townend**  
Top-class chaser who met with defeat for just the third time over fences when held by Jonbon in the Clarence House but he's twice taken centre stage in this race, easily scoring from Captain Guinness in 2023. Will do well to regain his crown but no surprise if his season peaks here.

**3 FOUND A FIFTY (IRE) (75) (D) 93**  
21221-11P 8 11-10 | 74.4kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland **J. W. Kennedy**  
High-class chaser who was second in last season's Arkle and won his next 3 starts, including the Grade 1 Maghull the following month from Master Chevy and Libberty Hunter. First blob on his scorecard at Leopardstown last time but had excuses (slight nasal discharge) and can bounce back.

**4 JONBON (FR) (53) (CD) 100**  
11211-111 9 11-10 | 74.4kg



Nicky Henderson **Nico de Boinville**  
His only 3 defeats have come here but he's a modern great, a credit to connections and wonderfully consistent performer who is better than ever this season, slamming Energumene in the Clarence House last time. Looks a lot more relaxed these days and this is his for the taking.

**5 LIBBERTY HUNTER (32) (CD) 87**  
5/F1123-12 9 11-10 | 74.4kg



Evan Williams **Adam Wedge**  
Runner-up in last season's Grand Annual and has continued to improve over fences this term, winning 2m handicap on the other course on return before taking second late on in the Game Spirit. His jumping wasn't so fluent there and he'll need another big step forward to figure here.

**6 MARINE NATIONALE (IRE) (38) (C, D) 91**  
111/15-232 8 11-10 | 74.4kg



Barry Connell, Ireland **Sean Flanagan**  
2023 Supreme winner in an unbeaten novice hurdle campaign and has looked to be coming to the boil over fences this term, again chasing home Solness in the Dublin Chase, deserving credit as the only one to get in a blow against the runaway winner. Looks set for a big run.

**7 QUILIXIOS (38) (C, D) 92**  
16185-124 8 11-10 | 74.4kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland **D. J. O'Keefe**  
2021 Triumph winner who flopped in last year's Arkle but bounced back on return with fine front-running victory at Naas (from Marine Nationale) and put it up to Jonbon for a bit in the Tingle Creek next time. Needs to bounce back from a poor run behind Solness at Leopardstown but can do so.

**8 SOLNESS (FR) (38) 93**  
01132411 7 11-10 | 74.4kg



Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland **J. J. Slevin**  
Has improved out of nowhere to take Grade 1s at Leopardstown the last twice with front-running tactics the order of the day again, jumping well and seeing off a number of these in the Dublin Chase last month. Not out of this.

8 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**4-5** Jonbon, **6-1** Energumene, **6-1** Marine Nationale, **10-1** Solness, **20-1** Found A Fifty, **33-1** Captain Guinness, **50-1** bar

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

JONBON's only defeats have come at Cheltenham but it's hard to see what can beat him in this on recent displays and his big day at the Festival has come. He's looked better than ever this season and more relaxed to boot and can see off the 2022 and 2023 winner Energumene. 2023 Supreme hero Marine Nationale looks to be coming to the boil and can go well.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

**1. JONBON 2. ENERGUMENE 3. MARINE NATIONALE**

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2024	<b>Captain Guinness</b>	9-11-10	17-2	Henry de Bromhead	Rachael Blackmore	6
2023	<b>Energumene</b>	9-11-10	6-5f	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	7
2022	<b>Energumene</b>	8-11-10	5-2	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	7
2021	<b>Put The Kettle On</b>	7-11-3	17-2	Henry de Bromhead	Aidan Coleman	9
2020	<b>Politologue</b>	9-11-10	6-1	Paul Nicholls	Harry Skelton	5

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race



**4.40**

RACE 6

**DEBENHAMS JOHNNY HENDERSON GRAND ANNUAL CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1)**  
**5yo+ £150,000 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)****GBI RACING**Going: **Good to Soft**; Cross Country: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Strong**

**1 JPR ONE (IRE) (32) (D)** t **99**  
1U317-134 8 12-0 | 76.2kg



Joe Tizzard

**Brendan Powell**

Won a Grade 2 at Lingfield as a novice last season and made a winning return on the back of wind surgery in the Haldon Cup at Exeter. Ran well behind Jonbon in the Tingle Creek next time but not quite so good in Game Spirit at Newbury. Remains of interest back in a handicap.

**2 DANCING ON MY OWN (IRE) (138) (CD)** t **98**  
21066-213 11 11-10 | 74.4kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

**Rachael Blackmore**

Has a good record in handicap chases in Britain, winning the Red Rum at Aintree 2 years ago and scoring over this C&D (off 1 lb lower) last term. Can go well fresh so must be respected after 3 decent runs early in the season.

**3 MY MATE MOZZIE (IRE) (39) (CD)** t **100**  
3/32126-32 9 11-9 | 73.9kg



Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland

**Keith Donoghue**

Useful on the Flat and smart over hurdles but seems best in this sphere, hitting the crossbar yet again in a valuable handicap when second at Leopardstown last month, exaggerated waiting tactics almost paying off. Another big run expected (C&D winner as a novice).

**4 AMERICAN MIKE (IRE) (60) (D)** t **99**  
1415-5634 8 11-6 | 72.6kg



Gordon Elliott, Ireland

**J. W. Kennedy**

Second in the Champion Bumper 3 years ago and winner of a Grade 2 chase (3m) at Navan as a novice last season. Flopped in the Brown Advisory 12 months ago but back to form down in distance last 2 starts. Not sure this trip is his optimum but likely strong pace will at least suit.

**5 NELLS SON (46) (D)** s **98**  
34217-113 10 11-6 | 72.6kg



Nicky Richards

**Danny McMenamin**

Better than ever at present and followed up his win in Carlisle graduation event with 2m1f handicap success (narrowly) at Kelso. Seemed undone by 5 lb rise at Doncaster since, however, so likely to find this too competitive.

**6 MARTATOR (FR) (39)** s **98**  
111-11376 8 11-5 | 72.1kg



Venetia Williams

**Charlie Deutsch**

Developed into a smart handicap chaser, bringing up the 5-timer with plenty to spare at Ascot (16.7f) in November. Has gradually gone off the boil since, however, and this a tough race to bounce back in.

**7 UNEXPECTED PARTY (FR) (52) (CD)** t **99**  
491P-5242 10 11-2 | 70.8kg



Dan Skelton

**Harry Skelton**

Sound jumper who enjoyed his finest hour when winning this race on heavy going 12 months ago (off 6 lb lower). This season's efforts suggest he's been building up to another tilt at this, so another bold bid looks on the cards (effective on better ground).

**8 GENERAL MEDRANO (IRE) (46) (D)** **98**  
5437-2142 8 11-1 | 70.3kg



Emma Lavelle

**Ben Jones**

Resumed winning ways at Newbury in November and arrives on the back of an excellent second at Doncaster 7 weeks ago (might've won had he been held out for longer). This race should be run to suit so not taken lightly.

**9 FRINGILL DIKE (IRE) (157) (D)** b **96**  
1F2-12015 8 11-0 | 69.9kg



Jedd O'Keefe

**Charlie Hammond**

Quickly made up into a better chaser than hurdler last season, successful on his first 3 starts over fences. Added to his tally with 2 more wins this term but something to prove now having not seen since a lethargic effort at Kelso in October.

**10 SO SCOTTISH (FR) (73) (D)** s **98**  
0-0245270 8 10-11 | 68.5kg



Emmet Mullins, Ireland

**Donagh Meyler**

Frustrating customer who's been expensive to follow, including at this meeting. Mixed record kept over hurdles this season and not seen in this sphere since falling 4 out (still going strongly) in December Gold Cup here last term. Will no doubt have his supporters once again.

**11 THE KING OF PRS (IRE) (60) (D)** t **97**  
136F4-231 7 10-10 | 68.0kg



Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland

**C. Stone-Walsh (31b/1kg)**

In the process of running poorly when falling in this race last season but has been in top form this term, producing a career best to win Grade 3 handicap at Fairyhouse under this rider 60 days ago. Likely to make a better fist of it this time around.

**12 TRAPRAIN LAW (FR) (39) (D)** t **98**  
1512-3443 7 10-8 | 67.1kg



Lucinda Russell

**Patrick Wadge**

Progressed into a useful chaser last term, winning twice and runner-up in a good-quality handicap at the Ayr Scottish Grand National meeting. Improvement has stalled this season but latest third at Musselburgh was creditable (seemed suited by more patient tactics). Could outrun his odds.

**13 GAELIC ARC (IRE) (39) (D)** **95**  
1542626F 9 10-7 | 66.7kg



John Patrick Ryan, Ireland

**D. E. Mullins**

Sole success over fences came in listed handicap at Killarney (by 8 lengths from Dancing On My Own) in July. Mixed record since then and fall at Leopardstown last month not an ideal preparation for this (usually a sound jumper).

**14 WESTERN ZEPHYR (IRE) (82) (D)** **96**  
2454P-123 8 10-7 | 66.7kg



Charlie Longsdon

**Sean Bowen**

Failed to win over fences last season but made a winning return following a wind up in 5-runner handicap at Carlisle. More than backed that up when second in C&D Grade 2 but disappointed back in a handicap at Ascot since. Others appeal more.

**15 JAZZY MATTY (FR) (52) (C, D)** s **96**  
0F13P122 6 10-7 | 66.7kg



Cian Michael Collins, Ireland

**Danny Gilligan**

Won the Fred Winter at this meeting in 2023. Similar form over fences, winning twice early in the season. Just denied in a messy 4-runner C&D novice in October and shaped well back over hurdles next time. Interesting contender making handicap debut in this sphere with headgear re-fitted.

**16 MIDNIGHT IT IS (39) (D, BF)** **96**  
14351-138 9 10-6 | 66.2kg



Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland

**Sean Flanagan**

Looked better than ever returning from 11 months off when winning Navan handicap in December. Unlucky not to finish closer when excellent third behind The King of Prs in Grade 3 handicap at Fairyhouse and easy to forgive next run (reportedly coughing post-race). Respected.

**17 THIRD TIME LUCKI (IRE) (46) (CD)** t **94**  
63149/265 10 10-6 | 66.2kg



Fergal O'Brien

**Jonathan Burke**

A smart chaser at his best for Dan Skelton and has good record here. Joined present connections for £190,000 but well below form all 3 starts this season after 19 months off. However, is potentially well handicapped if this has been the target (fourth in this 2 years ago off 15 lb higher).

**18 CONVERS HILL (IRE) (50) (D)** h **95**  
502-35671 7 10-3 | 64.9kg



Paul Nolan, Ireland

**S. F. O'Keefe**

Useful hurdler. Low-key start over fences this season but came good when narrow winner of 9-runner novice at Down Royal in January. Opening mark in this sphere demands more but remains unexposed as a chaser.

**19 JASKO DES DAMES (FR) (20)** t **97**  
5-0531125 6 10-3 | 64.9kg



Henry de Bromhead, Ireland

**D. J. O'Keefe**

Fairly useful over hurdles but has quickly developed into a better chaser, winning first 2 starts in the autumn. Latest effort probably best forgiven and remains with potential making handicap debut in this sphere.

**20 PRIMOZ (IRE) (26) (D)** t **98**  
741-14F31 7 10-2 | 64.4kg



Lucinda Russell

**Derek Fox**

Bookended his novice campaign over hurdles with victories at Ayr and perfect start in this sphere when scoring at Wetherby on return. Needed a match race to resume winning ways at Kelso last month but in fairness did it faultlessly. Will find this a totally different test, however.

**RESERVES**

**4.40**

RACE 6

**DEBENHAMS JOHNNY HENDERSON GRAND ANNUAL CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP CHASE (PREMIER HANDICAP) (1)**  
**5yo+ £150,000 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)****21** **DR T J ECKLEBURG (IRE) (18)** (D) **97**

34-312321 7 10-2 | 64.4kg



Evan Williams

**Reserve**Better than ever this season, winning twice, including narrowly at Chepstow last month, all out. 5 lb rise in much more competitive race makes him opposable.  
RESERVE.

20 DECLARED RUNNERS (1 RESERVE)

**BETTING FORECAST:****13-2** Unexpected Party, **15-2** My Mate Mozzie, **9-1** The King of Prs, **11-1** Jazzy Matty, **14-1** Jpr One, **14-1** So Scottish, **14-1** Midnight It Is, **16-1** American Mike, **22-1** Dancing On My Own, **25-1** General Medrano, **25-1** Jasko Des Dames, **25-1** Conyers Hill, **25-1** Third Time Lucki, **33-1** Primoz, **40-1** bar**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

Plenty to consider in what is a typically intriguing renewal. UNEXPECTED PARTY was a decisive winner of this last season so still looks on a good mark off 6 lb higher. This has likely been his long-term target once again, shaping as if he retains all his ability in 4 runs this campaign. Gavin Cromwell holds a strong hand with 3 live chances, My Mate Mozzie looking the pick, while Jpr One's Tingle Creek form puts him right in the mix off top weight.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:****1. UNEXPECTED PARTY 2. MY MATE MOZZIE 3. JPR ONE****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2024	<b>Unexpected Party</b>	9-10-10	12-1	Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton	16
2023	<b>Maskada</b>	7-11-1	22-1	Henry de Bromhead	D. J. O'Keeffe	19
2022	<b>Global Citizen</b>	10-10-6	28-1	Ben Pauling	Kielan Woods	16
2021	<b>Sky Pirate</b>	8-11-6	14-1	Jonjo O'Neill	Nick Scholfield	19
2020	<b>Chosen Mate</b>	7-11-4	7-2f	Gordon Elliott	Davy Russell	18

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race














**5.20**














RACE 7

**WEATHERBYS CHAMPION BUMPER (STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT) (Grade 1) (1) 4, 5 and 6yo £80,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)****GBI RACING**Going: **Good to Soft**; Cross Country: **Good to Soft (Good in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Strong**

<b>1</b>	<b>COPACABANA (31)</b>	<b>93</b>
	W. P. Mullins, Ireland  <i>Mr P. W. Mullins</i>	
	Looked potentially very smart when making a winning start to his career in Navan bumper. Top Irish yard has a tremendous record in this and he's a big player.	
<b>2</b>	<b>DALSTON LAD (IRE) (76) (D)</b>	<b>92</b>
	Dan Skelton <i>Tristan Durrell</i>	
	Won sole start in Irish points and 2-2 under Rules, making all in bumpers at Ayr and Aintree. It's likely that there are more races to be won with this son of Ocovango but this represents a big step up in class.	
<b>3</b>	<b>EL CAIROS (FR) (125) (D)</b>	<b>89</b>
	Gary & Josh Moore <i>Mr David Maxwell</i>	
	Irish point winner who landed 6-runner bumper at Newbury (good to soft) on Rules debut in November. Lots to like about the way he quickened clear of his rivals that day and improvement should be forthcoming, but he has much more on his plate this time.	
<b>4</b>	<b>FORTUNE DE MER (IRE) (34) (CD, BF)</b>	<b>92</b>
	Dan Skelton <i>Harry Skelton</i>	
	Runner-up completed start in points and filled the same spot starting out under Rules over C&D in October. Went one better back here the following month and excuses when turned over at odds on at Huntingdon last time, pulling hard in a steadily-run race. Still, others make more appeal.	
<b>5</b>	<b>GAMEOFINCHES (20) (D)</b>	<b>94</b>
	W. P. Mullins, Ireland  <i>P. Townend</i>	
	Easy winner of second run between the flags and has been to the fore in the ante-post market for this since his stylish Rules debut success in a Punchestown (soft) bumper last month. This strapping 6-y-o looked like something out of the ordinary that day and the sky could be the limit.	
<b>6</b>	<b>HEADS UP (87) (D)</b>	<b>91</b>
	John McConnell, Ireland <i>Sean Bowen</i>	
	Made it third time lucky in fine style at Punchestown (soft) in November, making all and coming home in splendid isolation. By no means disgraced when chasing home Kalypto's chance in a listed bumper at Navan since but it's hard to envisage him turning the tables on that rival here.	
<b>7</b>	<b>HE CAN'T DANCE (IRE) (39) (D)</b>	<b>92</b>
	Gordon Elliott, Ireland  <i>Mr H. C. Swan</i>	
	£300,000 Jukebox Jury gelding from good family and, having won his sole start between the flags, this 5-y-o made a successful Rules debut in a Navan bumper. Subsequent second in a Leopardstown Grade 2 was no backward step but he doesn't appear to be the stable first string on this occasion.	
<b>8</b>	<b>IDAHO SUN (IRE) (52) (D)</b>	<b>92</b>
	Harry Fry  <i>Bryan Carver</i>	
	Made winning start in 10-runner bumper at Newton Abbot and progressed when following up at Windsor (good to soft) in January. Clearly a good prospect but it's likely that a jolt of improvement will be needed if he's to withstand the challenge of some potentially smart Irish raiders.	
<b>9</b>	<b>I STARTED A JOKE (IRE) (39) (BF)</b>	<b>90</b>
	Charles Byrnes, Ireland <i>P. Byrnes</i>	
	Just fourth in a point last spring but made a winning Rules debut at Limerick during the Christmas period. Unsited by the way the race developed when behind some of these in a Grade 2 race at Leopardstown last time and likely greater emphasis on stamina here will aid his cause.	

<b>10</b>	<b>KALYPTO'S CHANCE (FR) (87) (D)</b>	<b>97</b>
	Gordon Elliott, Ireland  <i>J. W. Kennedy</i>	
	Won sole start in British points and has looked an exciting prospect in winning bumpers at Punchestown and Navan. The latter race was a listed event, in which he put 4 previous winners to the sword in good style, so there's substance to the form. Looks the pick of the Gordon Elliott pair.	
<b>11</b>	<b>NO DRAMA THIS END (IRE) (71) (D)</b>	<b>87</b>
	Paul Nicholls <i>Harry Cobden</i>	
	Bolted up in a point last February and perfect start to career under Rules when taking a 12-runner Warwick bumper (soft) on New Year's Eve. That form is clearly nothing special but he couldn't be in better hands and improvement is almost certainly on the cards.	
<b>12</b>	<b>SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY (FR) (315) (D)</b>	<b>95</b>
	Thomas Cooper, Ireland <i>Sam Ewing</i>	
	Successful first 2 starts last season, impressive winner of a Limerick listed event on the second occasion. However, he came up short in Grade 1 company when last seen at the Punchestown Festival 10 months ago and a similar fate likely awaits here.	
<b>13</b>	<b>SORTUDO (IRE) (39) (D)</b>	<b>92</b>
	W. P. Mullins, Ireland  <i>D. E. Mullins</i>	
	Easy winner of a Tramore bumper on Rules debut in November and failed to settle when second in messy race at Leopardstown over Christmas. Bettered that when again finding just one too good in a Grade 2 back at that Dublin venue last time but he doesn't appear to be the stable No 1 here.	
<b>14</b>	<b>AQUA FORCE (IRE) (25)</b>	<b>98</b>
	W. P. Mullins, Ireland  <i>M. P. Walsh</i>	
	There probably wasn't much depth to the Gowran bumper she won on debut for Miguel Gunn but she could hardly have been more impressive, running out the 28-length winner of that 14-runner affair. Subsequently bought by JP McManus and now in the care of Willie Mullins. Fascinating contender.	
<b>15</b>	<b>BAMBINO FEVER (IRE) (38) (D)</b>	<b>100</b>
	W. P. Mullins, Ireland  <i>Miss J. Townsend</i>	
	Wide-margin winner of sole start between the flags and made it 2-2 under Rules when landing a Grade 2 mares' bumper at Leopardstown (good to soft). Winners of that race don't have a particularly good record when bidding to follow up in this contest but she's clearly very promising.	
<b>16</b>	<b>HIGHLAND HAVEN (32)</b>	<b>93</b>
	Fergal O'Brien <i>Jonathan Burke</i>	
	Easy to back but barely came off the bridle when making a winning start in a Ffos Las bumper in November. Testing conditions perhaps to blame for low-key display next time and duly got back on track when going close at Warwick (soft). However, she lacks the star potential of some of these.	
<b>17</b>	<b>CABALLERO CLIFF (70)</b>	<b>83</b>
	Robert Stephens <i>Ben Jones</i>	
	Related to three winners and showed something when runner-up at Huntingdon on debut in November. Wasn't seen to best effect when fourth in a listed bumper here subsequently and should have races in him but this will likely prove to be a bridge too far at this stage of his career.	
<b>18</b>	<b>LANCELOT ALLEN (FR) (89) (D)</b>	<b>84</b>
	Mrs Jane Williams <i>David Noonan</i>	
	Half-brother to 3 winners, including smart chaser Enjoy d'Allen and French chaser Hermine Allen. Narrow winner of a small-field bumper at Bangor (heavy) in December and should have a future but almost certainly biting off more than he can chew here.	

18 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**4-1** Bambino Fever, **4-1** Copacabana, **11-2** Gameofinches, **6-1** Kalypto's chance, **10-1** Aqua Force, **25-1** Idaho Sun, **25-1** No Drama This End, **28-1** Fortune De Mer, **33-1** Heads Up, **40-1** bar

**5.20**

RACE 7

**WEATHERBYS CHAMPION BUMPER (STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT) (Grade 1) (1) 4, 5 and 6yo £80,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)****TIMEFORM VIEW:**

Willie Mullins may dominate this yet again. GAMEOFINCHES looked a really exciting prospect at Punchestown last month and gets a tentative vote over stablemates Copacabana, who created a strong impression when scoring on his debut in recent weeks, and Bambino Fever, who brings winning Graded form from the Dublin Racing Festival. Gordon Elliott has broken the Mullins stranglehold on this a couple of times in the last decade and his Navan listed winner Kalypso'chance looks best of the remainder.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:****1. GAMEOFINCHES 2. COPACABANA 3. BAMBINO FEVER****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2024	<b>Jasmin de Vaux</b> 5-11-7	9-2	W. P. Mullins	Mr P. W. Mullins	19
2023	<b>A Dream To Share</b> 5-11-7	7-2	John E. Kiely	Mr J. L. Gleeson	21
2022	<b>Facile Vega</b> 5-11-5	15-8f	W. P. Mullins	Mr P. W. Mullins	20
2021	<b>Sir Gerhard</b> 6-11-5	85-40	W. P. Mullins	Rachael Blackmore	14
2020	<b>Ferny Hollow</b> 5-11-5	11-1	W. P. Mullins	P. Townend	23

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race