

Issue 323

Sat 17th November 2018

BetFan

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TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

[Sean Haren Racing](#)

Win Bet - Cheltenham 16:00 - Royal Illusion @ 6/4

[Lucky 7 Naps](#)

Win Bet - Wetherby 14:50 - Kajaki @ 15/8

[Value Wins](#)

Win Bet - Wolverhampton (A.W) 17:45 - Reeth @ 4/1

Rick's Sports Betting: Proven Horses In Five To Follow

- By Rick Elliott

You can try to be a bit clever and include some promising but unproven horses in a list of horses to follow during the jumps season or focus on horses that have already produced the goods at the highest level. Horses often go back to the Cheltenham Festival and win races after being successful in a previous season. The horses to back during the 2018/19 National Hunt season in this list have already delivered at the meeting that matters most and can do the business again this season. The festival is unique in that it brings together the best horses in an atmosphere few have experienced before and knowing what to expect is worth its weight in gold. The Grand National is another unique occasion and experience of the fences and the whole occasion is worth a few pounds in weight.

In no particular order here is Rick Elliott's top 5 horses to follow for the jumps season:

Tiger Roll won the Grand National in April and will be aimed at the race again. It takes a special horse to win more than one National because the winner is burdened with more weight. Red Rum is the only horse to win the most famous steeplechase in the world three times and Tiger Roll could become a dual winner next spring as long as the handicapper gives the horse a fighting chance.

Samcro will be kept over hurdles this season and is the current favourite for the Champion Hurdle. The horse is a chaser in the making and has the scope to win the Champion Hurdle and then Gold Cup. Dawn Run is the only horse to win the most prestigious races over hurdles and fences and Samcro can complete the first leg of the double by winning the Champion Hurdle next March.

Native River won the Gold Cup last season and there is nothing to suggest the horse cannot win the race again. However, soft ground is more suitable and other horses may have more pace when the going is quick. However, if it comes up soft next March Native River will again be the horse to beat in the Gold Cup though Might Bite will relish good going.

Summerville Boy made two jumping mistakes at the end of the festival opener last season but still had enough in the tank to storm up the hill and win the race. A lesser horse would have faded out of contention but this animal produced a winning run. The Champion Hurdle looks like the target and that will be a tough ask but Summerville Boy looks a big each way price in the ante post market.

Altior has won different races at the last three festivals and can win again in March. The horse won the Champion Chase last season after looking in trouble at the top of the hill. The fall of Douvan made the task easier but Altior showed the class and turn of foot to win the race. Another Champion Chases is the target and on form and ratings Altior is the horse to back.

If you wish to extend your list and back other horses blindly during the season I suggest Laurina, Black Op, Kalashnikov, Min and Faugheen should be included to create 10 horses to follow over the next five months.

Today's Sports Betting Preview - By Rick Elliott

Where Would You Rather Be Today?

The Cheltenham Festival is one the great sporting occasions and race fans would rather be there in March than just about any other sporting occasion. It's the culmination of the jumps season and features championship races over hurdles and fences and a variety of distances. The three day November meeting is the second most well attended of the year and yesterday's attendance was a record for the Friday.

The crowd for today's card will be verging on festival proportions and the biggest race of the day is the BetVictor Gold Cup. Appropriately there is a horse called RATHER BE that has the form and potential to win the race. The Nicky Henderson runner has been backed and is now 5/1 with **Paddy Power** to win the race.

England play Croatia tomorrow in their Nations League decider at Wembley less than three days after the reserves and a guest in Wayne Rooney beat the United States in a glorified training match. There are seven matches in the Nations League today and the Sky "Main Event" is Scotland's game in Albania in League C.

Scotland are 20 places above their opponents in the FIFA rankings but have lost seven of their last nine matches. The visitors could win the group or be relegated into the second tier of the league. The football so far has been mundane so putting the game on the main event channel is a misnomer. The four matches in the group have produced eight goals and only one has featured over two so the bet is UNDER 2.5 GOALS at 1/2 with **bet365**.

The autumn rugby union internationals continue with England's home match against Japan at Twickenham. The second string look like starting the match but as we saw in England's 3-0 over the United States the reserves can still be good enough against visitors from another continent who are not totally motivated and up for the game. Japan are the World Cup hosts next year so will be more motivated and the handicap line looks too big. JAPAN +32 is the bet at Evens with **Ladbrokes**.

Trackside In Ireland - By Declan O'Donoghue

FOOTPAD and Saldier both hitting the deck at Naas last Saturday left punters reeling, but the day was not a total disaster for the main betting ring gladiators. Rhinestone - who had to dig deep - scored at 8/13 while Peacocks Secret at 7/2 was another winning "jolly".

Caravation 4/1 and Borderline Chatho 7/2 both landed some tidy bets while the previously frustrating De Name Escapes Me had many supporters when finally scoring at 5/1.

For all that Saldier in particular was still mighty costly (though overall they say Ruby was quite impressed by him) and backers were wary as they assembled at Navan 24 hours later.

Luckily not too many got involved in the opening handicap hurdle, which saw 20/1 shot Aasleagh Dawn beat 25/1 poke Olive D'Haguenet.

The Grade 3 For Auction Hurdle was next up and this proved a killing field for the players.

All the chalk was taken on even money hot pot Felix Desjy, with Quick Grabim the one for the Willie Mullins hordes being sent off at 7/4.

Both were buried, the favourite jumped poorly and finished last while Quick Grabim was a late running on fourth as stablemate Aramon skated home for Paul Townend at 8/1.

Mullins said of the winner: "That is a huge improvement and he showed more speed than we thought he had!"

"I suppose we could look at the Royal Bond now. I asked Paul not to make as much use of him as he did at Listowel."

"We are pleasantly surprised at how he responded to the change of tactics" he added.

The bookies were on good terms with the world but the tide was about to turn dramatically.

Apple's Jade got the ball rolling for the the punters, the shunters, the hungry Billy Bunters.

The even money jolly won doing handstands and whatever was bothering her in the second half of last season has vanished like mist on a summers morning.

For sure in her current mood she would win the Mares Hurdle at a canter, but the Champion Hurdle is well within her compass.

If she wins the Hatton's Grace in two weeks time - and what will stop her? - then the case for going the Champion route will grow stronger.

If things don't work out for Samcro she is certainly a juicy alternative for Gigginstown and Gordon Elliott.

The bookies at Navan were suddenly on the back foot and the betting ring sharks scented blood.

In the Fortria Chase backing Ballyoisin - 10/11 to 8/13 - was simply buying money, he had his rivals strung out and well cooked before the second last.

Us And Them at 5/1 in the next was well supported and in truth offered just a little respite to the men and women with the big satchels.

Charles Byrnes teaming up with Davy Russell is always a sign that the shrewd Limerick trainer means business.

Any morning 6/4 had long since vanished by the time business opened in the ring.

Still the layers needed a result and took him on. He was sent off at 9/10 and duly collected.

Ouch. All or nothing then for the bookies in the last.

They were brave, you've got to give them that, and they even went odds against on the favourite Column Of Fire with Gordon Elliott's hotpot sent off at 5/4.

Lisa O'Neill had an armchair ride, the roars from the stand said it all, easy as you like the favourite romped home.

The bookies and their staff weren't in the mood for reflection afterwards in the car parks, a day that started so brightly had turned into a nightmare.

And for the punters Footpad and Saldier the previous day suddenly seemed like an age ago.

GET THE INSIDE LINE... the winners keep rolling in for Declan's Irish Racing Service like Borderline Chatho 11/2 (w 7/2); Monbeg Worldwide 9/2; True Self 3/1 (w 6/4); Rain In Spain 5/2 (w 9/4); Josies Orders 9/4 (w 2/1); Honeysuckle 85/40 (w 9/10); Fintown Boy 6/4 (w evens); Captain Power 13/8 (w 5/4); Column Of Fire 5/4; Apple's Jade evens; Raynama 10/11; Ballyoisin 10/11 (w 8/13) and each way gems - Woodland Opera 16/1 (placed 13/2) and Burren Life 14/1 (placed 12/1).

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