<table>
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<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Race Name</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1.30</td>
<td>Ballymore Novices’ Hurdle (Baring Bingham) (Grade 1)</td>
<td>2m5f26y</td>
<td>4250 Metres</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>RSA Insurance Novices’ Chase (Grade 1)</td>
<td>3m80y</td>
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<td>Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase (Grade 1)</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Boodles Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle (Grade 3)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>Weatherbys Champion Bumper (Standard Open National Hunt Flat) (Grade 1)</td>
<td>2m87y</td>
<td>3300 Metres</td>
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**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.
Going: Heavy (Soft 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 expected. Horses who race prominently often fare well on the chase course, especially in shorter-distance races. 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.

Pace Information: Very Strong

1. **AHEAD OF THE CURVE (FR)** (72) 9H 89
   - Susan Corbett
   - James Corbett
   - Point winner who has developed into a pretty useful hurdler at up to 3m this term but surely biting off more than he can chew here.

2. **AYE AYE CHARLIE** (46) 6F 88
   - Fergal O’Brien
   - Conor Shoemark
   - Fairly useful bumper winner last season and reached a similar standard over hurdles without winning. Needs to improve significantly to take a hand here.

3. **BLACK OP (IRE)** (44) (D) 97
   - Tom George
   - Noel Fehily
   - Made mistakes but still readily landed odds in Doncaster maiden on second hurdle start and improved again when 14-length second to Santini in course event. Likely capable of even better.

4. **BRAHMA BULL (IRE)** (125) 81
   - W. P. Mullins, Ireland
   - D. J. Mullins
   - Unbeaten in 3 bumpers and readily justified short odds on Thurles hurdle debut in November. Needs to leave that bare form behind to figure but possible he could do so.

5. **COOLALLY (IRE)** (101) (BF) 82
   - Fergal O’Brien
   - Paddy Brennan
   - Irish point winner who looked good prospect when landing 16-runner bumper in October. Promising start over hurdles when second at Leicester in December but very much pitched in at the deep end here.

6. **DIABLO DE ROUET (FR)** (9) 82
   - Jo Hughes
   - Mark Grant
   - Fairly useful winning hurdler in the mud this winter but surely out of his depth here.

7. **DUC DES GENIEVRES (FR)** (38) 94
   - W. P. Mullins, Ireland
   - P. Townend
   - First run for yard when 4 lengths third of 8 to Next Destination in Naas Grade 1 and stepped up on that when 5 lengths second Samcro in Deloitte since. Likely capable of better still.

8. **GOWITHTHEFLOW (IRE)** (34) (D) 91
   - Ben Pauling
   - Daryl Jacob
   - Irish point winner who has quickly made up into a useful hurdler, winning 21f Doncaster novice (good to soft) in February. Open to further progress.

9. **KNIGHT IN DUBAI (IRE)** (36) (D) 90
   - Dan Skelton
   - Harry Skelton
   - Made a successful debut over hurdles at Wetherby in December. Better form in defeat since but will need to raise his game to get involved here.

10. **MIND’S EYE (IRE)** (39) (BF) 93
    - Henry de Bromhead, Ireland
    - Davy Russell
    - Useful effort when landing winning 15-runner handicap hurdle at Leopardstown (20f, soft) in December and probably worth forgiving his run over 2m there since.
Going: Heavy (Soft 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 expected. Horses that race prominently often fare well on the chase course, especially in shorter-distance races. 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.

Pace Information: Even

1. PRESENTING PERCY  2. MONALEE (IRE)  3. AL BOUM PHOTO (FR)

BETTING FORECAST:

- **11-4** Presenting Percy, **3-1** Monalee, **8-1** Al Boum Photo, **8-1** Black Corton, **9-1** Dounikos, **12-1** Elegant Escape, **16-1** Ballyoptic, **25-1** Bonbon Au Miel, **50-1** bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:

- The Irish have a very strong hand here with both Presenting Percy and Monalee arriving on the back of career-best efforts in deep races. The former’s length second to Gold Cup hopeful Our Duke edging him the vote. Al Boum Photo and Ballyoptic are also considered.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

- **1. PRESENTING PERCY**  **2. MONALEE (IRE)**  **3. AL BOUM PHOTO (FR)**

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

- 2017: Might Bite 8-11-4  7-2f Nicky Henderson Nico de Boinville 12
- 2016: Blaklion 7-11-4  8-1 Nigel Twiston-Davies Ryan Hatch 8
- 2015: Don Poli 6-11-4  13-8f W. P. Mullins B. J. Cooper 8
- 2014: O’Faolains Boy 7-11-4  12-1 Rebecca Curtis Barry Geraghty 15
- 2013: Lord Windermere 7-11-4  8-1 J. Culloty Davy Russell 11

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**1. AL BOUM PHOTO (FR)**

- **88**
- W. P. Mullins, Ireland
- Grade 2 hurdle winner who won maiden chase at Navan (17f) in November.

2. **ALLYSSON MONTERG (FR)**

- **86**
- Richard Hobson
- Winning hurdler who was sixth in the 2016 Albert Bartlett. Confined to just 2 starts subsequently, but made light of 15 month absence on chase bow at Exeter (19f) in February. This much tougher.

3. **BALLYOPTIC (IRE)**

- **95**
- Nigel Twiston-Davies
- Grade 1 winning hurdler. Hasn’t totally convinced with his jumping over fences but does boast a 2-4 record, landing Grade 2 Towton novice (3m) last month. Stamina/ground no issue and not discounted.

4. **BLACK CORTON (FR)**

- **97**
- P. Townend
- Having a terrific season under this pilot, winning 8 of his 10 starts including Grade 1 Kauto Star and latterly Grade 2 Reynoldstown at Ascot. Excellent jumping a real asset and he’s respected again.

5. **BONBON AU MIEL (FR)**

- **91**
- W. P. Mullins, Ireland
- Useful hurdler who left chase debut behind when convincingly taking a Navan maiden (20f) in January. Very much at home under testing conditions and unexposed so likely better to come.

6. **DOUNIKOS (FR)**

- **97**
- J. W. Kennedy
- Quickly reached a useful level over fences, landing Gowran maiden/Limerick Grade 2 late last year. Solid fourth behind Monalee in Flogas novice last time but work to do to reverse that form here.

7. **ELEGANT ESCAPE (IRE)**

- **93**
- Leighton Aspell
- Has made a good start over fences, accounting for Black Corton at Newbury in December. Second behind that rival next time but back to winning ways in Graduation chase latest. Still, more required here.

8. **FRA I. IRISH (IRE)**

- **86**
- Emma Lavellie
- Bumper/hurdles winner who left chase bow/return well behind when easily winning at Lingfield (23f). Hasn’t totally convinced either start since and set a stiff task now tackling Grade 1 company.

9. **MONALEE (IRE)**

- **99**
- Noel Fehily
- Smart hurdler, runner-up in last year’s Albert Bartlett. Made it 2-3 over fences (fell other start) in Grade 1 Flogas novice chase at Leopardstown in February, finding plenty. Big player back at 3m.

10. **PRESENTING PERCY**

- **100**
- Davy Russell
- Won the Pertemps Final last term and had a fine season again this time, winning twice over fences and Grade 2 hurdle. Found only Our Duke too good in Red Mills chase latest and he’s a leading player.

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10 DECLARED RUNNERS
Going: Heavy (Soft 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 expected. Horses race prominently often fare well on the chase course, especially in shorter-distance races. 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 for home too soon.

Pace Information: Very Strong

**CHASES OVER 2 MILES**

1. **DIAMOND KING (IRE)** (73) (C,D) 10/11 71.3kg
   - Gordon Elliott, Ireland
   - Davy Russell
   - Former winner of this race who was returning from 7 months off when respective third in Punchestown minor event in December. Not seen since, though, and percentage call is to look elsewhere.

2. **WILLIAM HENRY (IRE)** (60) (C,D) 8/11 71.7kg
   - Nicky Henderson
   - James Bowen (3lb/1kg)
   - Made successful return to hurdlng when landing Lanzarote handicap at Kempton in January. 6 lb rise fair and looks sure to go well under leading conditional pilot. Wears first-time cheekpieces.

3. **TOPOFTHEGAME (IRE)** (39) 11/2-14 6 11-7 73.9kg
   - Paul Nicholls
   - Sam Twiston-Davies
   - Built on promise of hurdlng return when landing big-field handicap at Sandown last month. Effective on this sort of ground and is one of the likelier contenders.

4. **ABYSSIAL (IRE)** (25) 4/11 8 11-6 72.6kg
   - W. P. Mullins, Ireland
   - D. E. Mullins
   - Showed some ability remains, on return from very long absence, when fourth in Red Mills Trial Hurdle last month. However, lack of form required to recommend him for this ultra-competitive heat.

5. **RIVER FROST** (60) (D) 3/11-19 6 11-4 71.7kg
   - Alan King
   - Barry Geraghty
   - Back on the up when encouraging fifth on Chepstow return in October, but looked likely winner of Fred Winter 2 years ago (fell last) and could be a totally different test this time.

6. **BLYE BERRY (FR)** (39) 7/11-15 7 11-2 70.8kg
   - W. P. Mullins, Ireland
   - P. Townend
   - Three-time winner over shorter trips in Ireland last term but limited to sole start this season (well held at Leopardstown last month) and yet to prove his effectiveness for this sort of stamina test.

7. **BURBANK (IRE)** (53) 2/12-19 6 11-2 70.8kg
   - Nicky Henderson
   - Jeremiah McGrath
   - Back on track when third in heavy-ground handicap at Ascot in January and acquitted himself well in Neptune over this C&D last season. Each-way player.

8. **VOIX DU REVE (FR)** (38) 5/12-19 6 11-1 70.3kg
   - W. P. Mullins, Ireland
   - D. J. Mullins
   - Down the field in a couple of 3-mile handicaps since returning from an absence this term, but looked likely winner of Fred Winter 2 years ago (fell last) and could be interesting now dropped in trip.

9. **ROYAL VACATION (IRE)** (72) (C,D) 3/19-35 8 11-1 70.3kg
   - Colin Tizzard
   - Harry Cobden
   - Rather gone backwards over fences since landing soft-ground handicap here last term, but shaped better switched back to home last mile and had wind operation since. Not ruled out.

10. **MOUNT MEWS (IRE)** (25) 11/2-13 7 11-1 70.3kg
    - Ruth Jefferson
    - Brian Hughes
    - Hasn’t totally convinced over fences this term and boasts some strong form over the smaller obstacles, so merits consideration off decent mark switched back to hurdlng.

11. **MAX DYNAMITE (FR)** (223) 7/9 8 11-0 69.9kg
    - W. P. Mullins, Ireland
    - R. Walsh
    - Followed up fine third in Melbourne Cup with solid effort over shorter trip in Sha Tin Grade 1 in December. Ruby Walsh’s choice on return to hurdlng so deserving of plenty of respect.

12. **FIVE LE KAP (FR)** (25) 10/12-17 6 11-0 69.9kg
    - Nicky Henderson
    - Daryl Jacob
    - Listed winner over hurdles in France in May on the back of a mighty effort in the Imperial Cup. However, rather gone backwards since and makes limited appeal.

13. **STOWAY MAGIC (IRE)** (26) (D) 2/12-15 7 10-13 69.4kg
    - Nicky Henderson
    - Nico de Boinville
    - Useful novice hurdlng last season, winning 3 times, but was well held on return to this discipline at Ascot last time and has his work cut out here.

14. **AS YOU WERE (FR)** (45) 1-42 6 10-13 69.4kg
    - Alan Fleming, Ireland
    - Denis O’Regan
    - Lightly-raced sort who found improvement when second in a Naas maiden last time. However, asked a big question on handicap debut and opening mark not particularly generous.

15. **SPRINGTOWN LAKE (IRE)** (42) 9-2-13 6 10-12 68.6kg
    - Philip Hobbs
    - Richard Johnson
    - Opened account over hurdles at Worcester in October and been placed in Grade 2 and listed company since. Made most of easy opportunity last but faces a totally different test this time.

16. **LE BREUIL (FR)** (95) (BF) 9/12-13 6 10-12 68.6kg
    - Ben Pauling
    - Aidan Coleman
    - Looked a good prospect when landing back-to-back novice hurdlng last term and upped game when second in Aintree handicap in December. Still low-mileage and is another to consider.

17. **RED INDIAN (34)** (8F) 9-13-21 6 10-12 68.6kg
    - Ben Pauling
    - David Bass
    - Made the frame all 4 starts in handicap company this season, latest when runner-up at Towcester last month. Effective with plenty of cut in the ground and should be in the mix once more.

18. **DUSKY LEGEND** (46) 3/13-23 8 10-12 68.6kg
    - Alan King
    - Wayne Hutchinson
    - Twice placed in the Dawn Run here and respectable third sent back over timber at Doncaster last time. However, may find this stamina test too much for her.

19. **C’EST JERSEY (FR)** (24) 10-12 6 10-12 68.6kg
    - W. P. Mullins, Ireland
    - Noel Fehily
    - Useful hurdlng who failed to build on his promising Fairyhouse chase debut last time. Atteniions switched back to smaller obstacles now but others make more appeal.

20. **THE ORGANIST (IRE)** (60) 7/12-15 7 10-12 68.6kg
    - Oliver Sherwood
    - Leighton Aspell
    - Resumed winning ways at Newbury over longer trip in December and shaped as if still in good form at Warwick last time. Not out of things.

21. **JEANNOT DE NONANT (FR)** (17) 3/13-11 6 10-12 68.6kg
    - Peter Bowen
    - Sean Bowen
    - Posted career best, on only second start for Peter Bowen, when winning 8-runner handicap at Southwell last month. This is much tougher but remains relatively unexposed over this sort of trip.

22. **FLEMCARA (IRE)** (39) (D) 52-51111 6 10-11 68.6kg
    - Emma Lavellle
    - Patrick Cowley (5lb/2kg)
    - Much improved since switched to handicaps, completing hat-trick in good style at Chepstow in January. Not seen to best effect at Sandown last time but this mark demands new personal best.
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**RACE 3**

**CORAL CUP HANDICAP HURDLE (Grade 3) (1) 4yo+**

- **£100,000 2m5f26y (4250 Metres)**

**23 BARRA (FR) (38)**

- **Odds: 7-10**
- **Jockey: J. W. Kennedy**
- **Condition: t**
- **Weight: 68.0kg**
- **Gordon Elliott, Ireland**

Upped her game, on handicap bow, when second in 18-runner contest at Leopardstown (18f) last month. 4 lb higher now but will be a player if handling this longer trip.

**24 BASTIEN (FR) (32)**

- **Odds: 7-10**
- **Jockey: Tom Cannon**

Comfortable winner of Towcester handicap in November and in process of running well when falling last at Wincanton next time. Well held latest, however, and pitched into deeper contest now.

**25 GRACEFUL LEGEND (53)**

- **Odds: 10-9**
- **Jockey: Max Kendrick**

Won 4 mares' handicap hurdles last season and further progress when scoring at Ascot in November. Not at her best last time, though, and others appear better treated.

**26 PROJECT BLUEBOOK (FR) (32)**

- **Odds: 10-9**
- **Jockey: Mark Walsh**

Rounded off juvenile campaign with Grade 3 win at Fairyhouse, but hasn't really threatened this season and these conditions unlikely to play to his strengths.

**RESERVES**

**27 MISCHIEVOUS MAX (IRE) (75)**

- **Odds: 10-8**
- **Jockey: Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland**

In fine form when second in C&D handicap last autumn but disappointed sole start since and faces a stiff task in this company. RESERVE.

**28 KILDISART (IRE) (25)**

- **Odds: 10-8**
- **Jockey: Ben Pauling**

Posted improved form when runner-up on Kempton handicap debut in December and far from disgraced off higher mark at Ascot subsequently. More on plate here, however. RESERVE.

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**26 DECLARED RUNNERS (2 RESERVES)**

**BETTING FORECAST:**

17-2 Max Dynamite, 10-1 William Henry, 14-1 Le Breuil, 16-1 Topofthegame, 18-1 Voix Du Reve, 18-1 Mount Mews, 18-1 Burbank, 25-1 Diamond King, 25-1 Barra, 25-1 Red Indian, 25-1 Springtown Lake, 25-1 River Frost, 25-1 Royal Vacation, 28-1 Stowaway Magic, 28-1 The Organist, 33-1 Fixe Le Kap, 33-1 Bleu Berry, 33-1 Cest Jersey, 33-1 Flemcara, 33-1 As You Were, 40-1 bar

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**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

In a typically-competitive renewal, it could be worth chancing VOIX DU REVE, who looked very likely to land the Fred Winter here 2 years ago (travelling best when fell last) and may have bounced after an encouraging return in December. William Henry is feared most after his Lanzarote victory last time, whilst Mount Mews, Topofthegame and Max Dynamite are also much respected.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

1. **VOIX DU REVE (FR)** 2. **WILLIAM HENRY (IRE)** 3. **MOUNT MEWS (IRE)**

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**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

- **2017 Supasundae 7-11-4 16-1 Mrs J. Harrington 25-1 Robin Power**
- **2016 Diamond King 8-11-3 12-1 Gordon Elliott 14-1 Davy Russell**
- **2015 Aux Ptits Soins 5-10-7 9-1 Paul Nicholls 25-1 Sam Twiston-Davies**
- **2014 Whisper 6-11-1 14-1 Nicky Henderson 28-1 Nico de Boinville (S)**
- **2013 Medinaz 6-11-10 33-1 Alan King 28-1 Wayne Hutchinson**

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Going: Heavy (Soft 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 expected. Horses who race prominently often fare well on the chase course, especially in shorter-distance races. 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.

Pace Information:

Extreme

1 ALTIOR (IRE) (32) (CD) 100
Nicky Henderson
Nico de Boinville
Unbeaten top-class hurdler and even better over fences, winning Arkle last year. Delayed return this term due to wind op but looked every bit as good as ever in beating Politologue at Newbury.

2 AR MAD (FR) (95) (D) 90
Gary Moore
Joshua Moore
Bold-jumping front-runner who was a Grade 1 winner during his novice season but has been an infrequent visitor to the track since. Behind Politologue in Tingle Creek in December and off again since.

3 CHARBEL (IRE) (95) (D) 90
Kim Bailey
David Bass
Running big race when falling 2 out in last year’s Arkle, although he wouldn’t have troubled Altior. Fine fourth to Politologue in Tingle Creek but surely playing for minor honours at best.

4 DOUVAN (FR) (364) (CD, BF) 99
W. P. Mullins, Ireland
R. Walsh
Outstanding performer at his best but unbeaten run for this yard ended with a poor run in this race 12 months ago and hasn’t been seen since. Walsh does side with him over Min, though.

5 GOD’S OWN (IRE) (60) (D) 94
Tom George
Paddy Brennan
Top-class Grade-1 winning chaser at his best. Some way below that level in 2 outings this term but he’s one who tends to come into his own in the spring.

6 MIN (FR) (39) (D) 96
W. P. Mullins, Ireland
P. Townend
Only scrambled home from Simply Nied at Leopardstown over Christmas (subsequently last race in stewards’ room) but quickly back on the up when hammering that same rival back there last month.

7 ORDINARY WORLD (IRE) (39) (D) 88
Henry de Bromhead, Ireland
Davy Russell
Third to Altior in Arkle last term and has continued in good form this time round. Would have finished second to Min at Leopardstown last time but for blundering the last. This tougher still, though.

8 POLITOLOGUE (FR) (32) (D) 94
Paul Nicholls
Sam Twiston-Davies
Top-class performances when winning first 3 outings this term, including Tingle Creek, but readily outgunned by Altior in Game Spirit at Newbury last time. Hard to see how he can turn the tables.

9 SPECIAL TIARA (39) (CD) 93
Henry de Bromhead, Ireland
Noel Fehily
Made it fourth time lucky in this race 12 months ago but hasn’t hit the same heights in 2 completed runs this term and surprise if doesn’t come up a little short this time round.

9 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

4-6 Altior, 4-1 Douvan, 9-1 Min, 16-1 Politologue, 40-1 bar
### Glenfarclas Chase (Cross Country) (2) 5yo+ £65,000 3½m37y (6070 Metres)

**RACE 5**

**CHELTENHAM**  Wednesday 14th March

**4.10**

Going: Heavy (Soft 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 expected. Horses who race prominently often fare well on the chase course, especially in shorter-distance races. 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 for horses to lose back.

**Pace Information:** Even

**1** AUVERGNAT (FR)  (31) 16-11  11  11-4  71.7kg
Enda Bolger, Ireland
Mark Walsh
Just about a career best when fourth in this last year having landed a cross-country event at Punchestown, and has warmed up for this with a repeat win, narrowly seeing off Josies Orders.

**2** BEEVES (IRE)  (38) 18531-19  11  11-4  71.7kg
Jennie Candish
Sean Quinlan
Developed into a smart chaser for present stable, winning 3 in a row last year. Fit from a spin over hurdles and wouldn't be a surprise were he to take to this discipline, but he has a bit to find.

**3** BLESS THE WINGS (IRE) (89) (CDI) 0026-1P1  13  11-4  71.7kg
Gordon Elliott, Ireland
Davy Russell
Excellent effort when second to Cause of Causes in this last year and enhanced superb course record when landing a 9-runner contest in December. No reason why he won't give another good shot.

**4** CANTLOW (IRE) (89) (CDI) 1122-92  13  11-4  71.7kg
Enda Bolger, Ireland
D. J. McNemey
Heavily backed for this race in 2017 following a brace of cross-country wins the previous winter, but he could manage only third. Found only Bless The Wings too good in a C&D handicap in December.

**5** CAUSE OF CAUSES (USA) (38) (CDI) s+t 97
Gordon Elliott, Ireland
Mr J. J. Codd
Can boast a tremendous Festival record, completing a remarkable hat-trick in this race last year (NH Chase in 2015 and Kim Muir in 2016). Wouldn't read too much into heavy reappearance defeat.

**6** CHIC NAME (FR) (31) h 82
Richard Hobson
Jonathan Burke
Handicap chase winner a year ago and seemed to run well from unfavourable terms at Exeter last month. Is right up against it on these terms again and has stamina to prove over this new test.

**7** FEDERICI (21) s 83
Donald McCain
Will Kennedy
Has experience in this discipline given he was previously trained by Enda Bolger, but is right up against it on these terms from what he's offered for current yard.

**8** HURRICANE DARWIN (IRE) (31) t 83
Alan Fleming, Ireland
Denis O'Regan
Back-to-back handicap winner over fences/hurdles during the autumn. Took pretty well to the banks when fourth at Punchestown last month (behind a couple of these), but chance is far from obvious here.

**9** JOSIES ORDERS (IRE) (31) (CDI) s 92
Enda Bolger, Ireland
Miss N. Carberry
Heavily backed when second in the 2016 renewal, only to be subsequently awarded the race. Lightly raced since but perhaps an unlucky loser when second to stablemate Auvergnat last time.

**10** SAINT ARE (FR) (46) s+t 92
Tom George
A. P. Heskin
Established as a smart staying handicap chaser, finishing placed in the Grand National for the second time in 2017. Set a stiff task and looked rusty on hurdles return and now tries a new discipline.

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### BETTING FORECAST:

**7/2** Cause of Causes, **13-2** The Last Samurai, **7-1** Tiger Roll, **15-2** Josies Orders, **9-1** Bless The Wings, **9-1** Auvergnat, **16-1** Cantlow, **20-1** Urgent De Gregaine, **28-1** Hurricane Darwin, **50-1** bar

### TIMEFORM VIEW:

To say that CAUSE OF CAUSES comes alive at this meeting would be a gross understatement, and following last year’s ready win in this race, he is selected to make it a remarkable fourth Festival win in a row. The Last Samurai is the pick at the weights so is a huge threat if taking to this discipline at the first time of asking, with Josies Orders perhaps the pick of the Enda Bolger trio.

### TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

**1. CAUSE OF CAUSES (USA) 2. THE LAST SAMARI (IRE) 3. JOSIES ORDERS (IRE)**

---

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cause of Causes</th>
<th>4-1</th>
<th>Gordon Elliott</th>
<th>Mr J. J. Codd</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Josies Orders</td>
<td>8-11-9</td>
<td>Enda Bolger</td>
<td>Miss N. Carberry</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Rivage d’Or</td>
<td>10-10-10</td>
<td>A. J. Martin</td>
<td>Davy Russell</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Balthazar King</td>
<td>10-11-12</td>
<td>Philip Hobbs</td>
<td>Richard Johnson</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Big Shu</td>
<td>9-10-5</td>
<td>Peter Maher</td>
<td>B. M. Cash</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**16 DECLARED RUNNERS**

---

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cause of Causes</th>
<th>4-1</th>
<th>Gordon Elliott</th>
<th>Mr J. J. Codd</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Josies Orders</td>
<td>8-11-9</td>
<td>Enda Bolger</td>
<td>Miss N. Carberry</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Rivage d’Or</td>
<td>10-10-10</td>
<td>A. J. Martin</td>
<td>Davy Russell</td>
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</tr>
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<td>10-11-12</td>
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<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Big Shu</td>
<td>9-10-5</td>
<td>Peter Maher</td>
<td>B. M. Cash</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TRACK INFORMATION

**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 expected. Horses who race prominently often fare well on the chase course, especially in shorter-distance races. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field days over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon.

**Pace Information:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASA TALL (FR)</strong> (109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ended his time in France on the up, winning his last 2 starts (fairly useful form). Stiff task from top weight, but further improvement not ruled out for new yard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MICHOUKA (FR) (18) (D)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Elliott, Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy strike rate over hurdles, not needing to come out of first gear to land his fourth race of the campaign last time. Appears as the type to be suited by a well-run affair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STYLE DE GARDE (FR) (61) (D, BF)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicky Henderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking winner under a penalty on his British debut at Newbury in December. Below expectations when fourth of 5 to Esprit De Somoza last time, but still early days and worth another chance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT OF VALOUR (38) (D)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Nicholls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful Flat recruit who looked thoroughly professional when making a successful hurdling debut at Newcastle in December. Clearly wasn’t 100% next time and firmly back on the up when runner-up latest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MERCENAIRE (FR) (31) (D, BF)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left his form well behind in France when winning easily in the mud at Exeter in November. Found out in better company since and handicapper hasn’t done him any favours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESPRIT DE SOMOZA (FR) (22) (BF)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left his hurdling debut form well behind when winning in good style at Huntingdon (15f, soft) in January. Slow pace not conducive when runner-up last time and should still do better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NUBE NEGRA (SPA) (47) (D)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Skelton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maiden on Flat in Spain, but has made a promising start to hurdle career, with his defeat having come at the hands of Apple’s Shakira here in December. Likely to thrive in a well-run race like this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOOK MY WAY (46) (D)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Quinn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful Flat recruit who made the most of a good opportunity to get off the mark at Ludlow in January. No match for the impressive Apple’s Shakira last time, but he may yet do better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRAVE DANCING (38)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Cottin, France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly useful form over hurdles in France, made it third time lucky when scoring at Pau (17f4, heavy) last month. Plenty of improvement required to defy this mark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LISP (IRE) (25) (BF)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Won 2 of his 4 starts over hurdles, shaped very well when third to Turning Gold in Victor Ludorum at Haydock last time. Still progressing and remains with plenty of potential heading into handicaps.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### RESERVES

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>AMERICAN CRAFTSMAN (IRE) (77)</td>
<td>(D)</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>134</td>
<td>4 10-10</td>
<td>68.0kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jedd O’Keeffe</td>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Already achieved more in this sphere than he did on the Flat. Best effort when third in a listed event at Wetherby in November. A few likely to prove too strong here though. RESERVE.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 24 | LES ARCEAUX (IRE) (25) | 94 |
|    | 224 | 4 10-10 | 68.0kg |
|    | Henry de Bromhead, Ireland | Reserve |
|    | Multiple Flat winner for Johnny Murtagh. Fairly useful form when runner-up first 2 starts over hurdles. Disappointed last time, but worth another chance. RESERVE. |

**22 DECLARED RUNNERS (2 RESERVES)**

**BETTING FORECAST:**

- 15-2 Act of Valour
- 8-1 Nube Negra
- 12-1 Mitchouka
- 14-1 Lisp
- 14-1 Style De Garde
- 16-1 Esprit De Somoza
- 16-1 Look My Way
- 16-1 The King of May
- 22-1 Eragon De Chanay
- 22-1 Oxford Blu
- 25-1 Casa Tall
- 25-1 Padleyourownname
- 28-1 Turning Gold
- 28-1 Embole
- 28-1 Vener of Charm
- 33-1 Solo Saxophone
- 33-1 Grand Sancy
- 40-1 Knight Destroyer
- 40-1 Ibar

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

LISP shaped very well when third in the Victor Ludorum at Haydock last time, and would have gone close but for a late blunder. He appeals as the sort to excel in a big-field handicap scenario such as this, and remains capable of better. However, the list of dangers is extensive, headed by Act of Valour, Nube Negra and The King of May.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

1. LISP (IRE)  
2. ACT OF VALOUR  
3. NUBE NEGRA (SPA)

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Trainer</th>
<th>Jockey</th>
<th>Odds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Flying Tiger</td>
<td>4-11-5</td>
<td>Nick Williams</td>
<td>33-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Diego du Charmil</td>
<td>4-11-1</td>
<td>Paul Nicholls</td>
<td>13-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Qualando</td>
<td>4-11-0</td>
<td>Paul Nicholls</td>
<td>25-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Hawk High</td>
<td>4-11-1</td>
<td>Tim Easterby</td>
<td>33-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Flaxen Flare</td>
<td>4-10-7</td>
<td>Gordon Elliott</td>
<td>25-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**WEATHERBY’S CHAMPION BUMPER (STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT) (Grade 1) 1, 4, 5 and 6yo £75,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)**

**CHELTENHAM Wednesday 14th March**

**5.30 RACE 7**

Going: Heavy (Soft 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 expected. Horses who race prominently often fare well on the chase course, especially in shorter-distance races. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just the half-mile to go before the last flight. Most of the barricades are only about 5 feet high, and although there can be a tendency to go 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.

**Pace Information:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>NESTOR PARK (FR) (32) (D)</th>
<th>84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>215</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ben Pauling</td>
<td>Daryl Jacob</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Runner-up on debut at Bangor and confirmed that promise when going one better at Ascot. Only 14 lengths fifth of 10 to Acye Milan in listed bumper at Newbury next time, however.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>RHINESTONE (IRE) (39) (D)</th>
<th>96</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>132</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Patrick O’Brien, Ireland</td>
<td>Barry Geraghty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Has progressed into one of Ireland’s top bumper horses, wide-margin winner on heavy ground at Thurles and clear of rest after conceding first rank to Blackrow in Grade 2 at Leopardstown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>SEDDON (IRE) (38)</th>
<th>88</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tom George</td>
<td>A. P. Heskin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£30,000 3-y-o, Stowaway gelding who overcame early greenness and slight unease in the market to make a winning start in good style at Musselburgh. Can do better.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>STONEY MOUNTAIN (IRE) (48) (D)</th>
<th>84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry Daly</td>
<td>Andrew Tinkler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Left debut well behind to win 10-runner bumper at Warwick (16f, soft) 48 days ago but needs to take another huge step forward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>THEBANNERSKINGREBEL (IRE) (33) (D)</th>
<th>86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jamie Snowden</td>
<td>Gavin Sheehan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strong in the betting and made impressive winning start to career at Warwick and maintained unbeaten record with plenty in hand at Bangor. Will go on improving and worth his place in better company.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>THE BIG BITE (IRE) (78) (D)</th>
<th>91</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tom George</td>
<td>Noel Fehily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showed quirks but also good turn of foot to win AW bumper a year ago for Tom Lacey. Defied penalty in good style on first start for new yard at Huntingdon in December and looks a good prospect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>THE FLYING SOFA (FR) (17)</th>
<th>89</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>331</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gary Moore</td>
<td>Jamie Moore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can be a useful level when third in Ascot listed event on debut. Off the mark at third attempt at Fontwell but disappointed on testing ground in between.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>TORNADO FLYER (IRE) (59) (D)</th>
<th>85</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. P. Mullins, Ireland</td>
<td>P. Townend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Justified strong support when making winning debut at Fairyhouse in January, showing good attitude to hold on from subsequent winner. This much tougher, but open to improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>COLREEVY (IRE) (38) (D, BF)</th>
<th>86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. P. Mullins, Ireland</td>
<td>D. J. Mullins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Landed odd on debut but only 4 lengths third of 12 to Relegate in Grade 2 bumper (5f) at Leopardstown (16f, soft) 35 days ago, finding less than looked likely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>RELEGATE (IRE) (38) (D)</th>
<th>90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>68.9kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. P. Mullins, Ireland</td>
<td>Ma K. Walsh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Winner of both her starts, including when beating her better fancied stablemate (Colreevy) in Grade 2 at Leopardstown last time under this rider.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>ACYE MILAN (IRE) (32) (C, D)</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1111</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony Honeyball</td>
<td>Aidan Coleman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improved with each run and produced a high-class bumper effort faced with stiffest test of stamina so far when defying penalty in listed bumper at Newbury (heavy). Leading form claims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race 7</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>ARCH MY BOY (26) (D)</th>
<th>79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>832</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Martin Smith</td>
<td>Leighton Aspell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progressive in bumpers, just denied at Fakenham last time, but very hard to see him breaking his duck in this.
JAYTRACK PARKHOMES [(27) 78]

Colin Tizzard  
Harry Cobden
Narrowly won a 6-runner bumper at Fontwell (13.7f, heavy) on debut 27 days ago and will find this a good deal harder.

VOLCANO (FR) [(72) 86]

Nigel Twiston-Davies  
Sam Twiston-Davies
Looked a good prospect when overcoming greenness to make successful debut at Exeter in October but disappointed in listed event here next time and has since left Christian Williams.

BETTING FORECAST:
5-1 Blackbow, 8-1 Acey Milan, 9-1 Felix Desjy, 12-1 Rhinestone, 12-1 Didtheyleaveusoutto, 12-1 Carefully Selected, 12-1 Tornado Flyer, 22-1 Know The Score, 28-1 Crooks Peak, 33-1 The Big Bite, 33-1 Relegate, 33-1 Thebannerkingrebelf, 40-1 bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:
Plenty of unknown quantities as usual, but the one that makes most appeal is the progressive 4-y-o ACEY MILAN, who is the pick on form and should relish the stiff finish. It often pays to follow Willie Mullins, the leading trainer in this race with 8 wins, with Blackbow and Tornado Flyer making most appeal of his quintet.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:
1. ACEY MILAN (IRE)   2. BLACKBOW (IRE)   3. TORNADO FLYER (IRE)

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:
2017 Fayonagh 5-10-12 7-1 Gordon Elliott  Mr. J. J. Codd 22
2016 Ballyandy 5-11-5 4 5-1 Nigel Twiston-Davies  Sam Twiston-Davies 23
2015 Moon Racer 6-11-5 9-2f  David Pipe  Tom Scudamore 23
2014 Silver Concorde 6-11-5 16-1  D. K. Weld  Robbie McNamara 22
2013 Briar Hill 5-11-5 25-1  W. P. Mullins  R. Walsh 23