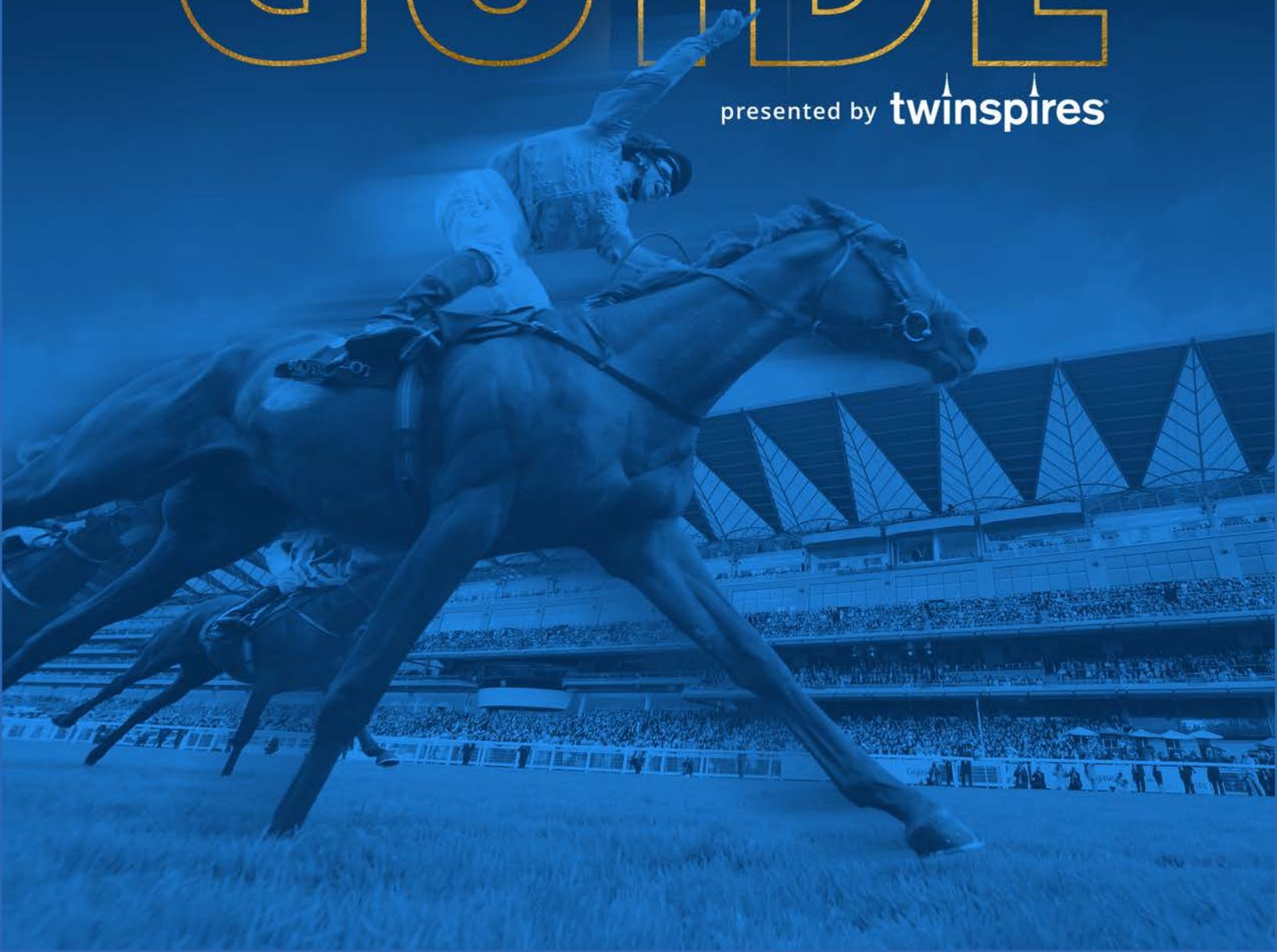


ROYAL  ASCOT

BETTING GUIDE

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ROYAL  ASCOT

BETTING GUIDE



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RACE SCHEDULE

TUESDAY - JUNE 16, 2026

| Local Time | UTC | EDT | CDT | MDT | PDT | Race | Age | Prize Fund | Distance |
|------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--|---------|------------|--------------------------|
| 02:30 PM | 1:30pm | 9:30am | 8:30am | 7:30am | 6:30am | The Queen Anne Stakes (Group 1) | 4+ | £800,000 | Straight Mile |
| 03:05 PM | 2:05pm | 10:05am | 9:05am | 8:05am | 7:05am | The Coventry Stakes (Group 2) | 2 | £200,000 | Six furlongs |
| 03:40 PM | 2:40pm | 10:40am | 9:40am | 8:40am | 7:40am | The King Charles III Stakes (Group 1) | 3+ | £700,000 | Five furlongs |
| 04:20 PM | 3:20pm | 11:20am | 10:20am | 9:20am | 8:20am | The St James's Palace Stakes (Group 1) | 3 colts | £700,000 | Old Mile |
| 05:00 PM | 4:00pm | 12:00pm | 11:00am | 10:00am | 9:00am | The Ascot Stakes (Handicap) (Class 2) (0-100) | 4+ | £120,000 | Two miles, four furlongs |
| 05:35 PM | 4:35pm | 12:35pm | 11:35am | 10:35am | 9:35am | The Wolferton Stakes (Listed) | 4+ | £125,000 | One mile, two furlongs |
| 06:10 PM | 5:10pm | 1:10pm | 12:10pm | 11:10am | 10:10am | The Copper Horse Stakes (Handicap) (Class 2) (0-100) | 4+ | £120,000 | One mile, six furlongs |



WEDNESDAY - JUNE 17, 2026

| Local Time | UTC | EDT | CDT | MDT | PDT | Race | Age | Prize Fund | Distance |
|------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|-----------|------------|------------------------|
| 02:30 PM | 1:30pm | 9:30am | 8:30am | 7:30am | 6:30am | The Queen Mary Stakes (Group 2) | 2 fillies | £150,000 | Five Furlongs |
| 03:05 PM | 2:05pm | 10:05am | 9:05am | 8:05am | 7:05am | The Queen's Vase (Group 2) | 3 | £265,000 | One Mile, Six Furlongs |
| 03:40 PM | 2:40pm | 10:40am | 9:40am | 8:40am | 7:40am | The Duke of Cambridge Stakes (Group 2) | 4+ F/M | £225,000 | Old Mile |
| 04:20 PM | 3:20pm | 11:20am | 10:20am | 9:20am | 8:20am | The Prince of Wales's Stakes (Group 1) | 4+ | £1,000,000 | One Mile, two furlongs |
| 05:00 PM | 4:00pm | 12:00pm | 11:00am | 10:00am | 9:00am | The Royal Hunt Cup (Heritage Handicap) (Class 2) (Open) | 3+ | £175,000 | Straight Mile |
| 05:35 PM | 4:35pm | 12:35pm | 11:35am | 10:35am | 9:35am | The Kensington Palace Stakes (Handicap) (Class 2) | 4+ F/M | £110,000 | Straight Mile |
| 06:10 PM | 5:10pm | 1:10pm | 12:10pm | 11:10am | 10:10am | The Windsor Castle Stakes (Listed) | 2 | £110,000 | Five Furlongs |

THURSDAY - JUNE 18, 2026

| Local Time | UTC | EDT | CDT | MDT | PDT | Race | Age | Prize Fund | Distance |
|------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|-----------|------------|--------------------------|
| 2:30 PM | 1:30 PM | 9:30 AM | 8:30 AM | 7:30 AM | 6:30 AM | The Chesham Stakes (Listed) | 2 | £125,000 | Seven furlongs |
| 3:05 PM | 2:05 PM | 10:05 AM | 9:05 AM | 8:05 AM | 7:05 AM | The King George V Stakes (Handicap) | 3 | £120,000 | One Mile, Four Furlongs |
| 3:40 PM | 2:40 PM | 10:40 AM | 9:40 AM | 8:40 AM | 7:40 AM | The Ribblesdale Stakes (Group 2) | 3 fillies | £250,000 | One Mile, Four Furlongs |
| 4:20 PM | 3:20 PM | 11:20 AM | 10:20 AM | 9:20 AM | 8:20 AM | The Gold Cup (Group 1) | 4+ | £700,000 | Two Miles, Four Furlongs |
| 5:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 11:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 9:00 AM | The Britannia Stakes (Heritage Handicap) | 3 C/G | £130,000 | Straight Mile |
| 5:35 PM | 4:35 PM | 12:35 PM | 11:35 AM | 10:35 AM | 9:35 AM | The Hampton Court Stakes (Group 3) | 3 | £175,000 | One Mile, Two Furlongs |
| 6:10 PM | 5:10 PM | 1:10 PM | 12:10 AM | 11:10 AM | 10:10 AM | The Buckingham Palace Stakes (Handicap) | 3+ | £120,000 | Seven Furlongs |

continued from previous page

FRIDAY - JUNE 19, 2026

| Local Time | UTC | EDT | CDT | MDT | PDT | Race | Age | Prize Fund | Distance |
|------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|-----------|------------|-------------------------|
| 2:30 PM | 1:30 PM | 9:30 AM | 8:30 AM | 7:30 AM | 6:30 AM | The Albany Stakes (Group 3) | 2 fillies | £125,000 | Six furlongs |
| 3:05 PM | 2:05 PM | 10:05 AM | 9:05 AM | 8:05 AM | 7:05 AM | The Commonwealth Cup (Group 1) | 3 C/F | £700,000 | Six furlongs |
| 3:40 PM | 2:40 PM | 10:40 AM | 9:40 AM | 8:40 AM | 7:40 AM | The Duke of Edinburgh Stakes (Handicap) | 3+ | £120,000 | One Mile, Four Furlongs |
| 4:20 PM | 3:20 PM | 11:20 AM | 10:20 AM | 9:20 AM | 8:20 AM | The Coronation Stakes (Group 1) | 3 fillies | £700,000 | Round (Old) Mile |
| 5:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 11:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 9:00 AM | The Sandringham Stakes (Handicap) | 3 fillies | £120,000 | Straight Mile |
| 5:35 PM | 4:35 PM | 12:35 PM | 11:35 AM | 10:35 AM | 9:35 AM | The King Edward VII Stakes (Group 2) | 3 C/G | £250,000 | One Mile, Four Furlongs |
| 6:10 PM | 5:10 PM | 1:10 PM | 12:10 AM | 11:10 AM | 10:10 AM | The Palace of Holyroodhouse Stakes (Handicap) | 3 | £120,000 | Five Furlongs |

SATURDAY - JUNE 20, 2026

| Local Time | UTC | EDT | CDT | MDT | PDT | Race | Age | Prize Fund | Distance |
|------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|-----|------------|-------------------------|
| 2:30 PM | 1:30 PM | 9:30 AM | 8:30 AM | 7:30 AM | 6:30 AM | The Norfolk Stakes (Group 2) | 2 | £175,000 | Five furlongs |
| 3:05 PM | 2:05 PM | 10:05 AM | 9:05 AM | 8:05 AM | 7:05 AM | The Hardwicke Stakes (Group 2) | 4+ | £250,000 | One Mile, Four Furlongs |
| 3:40 PM | 2:40 PM | 10:40 AM | 9:40 AM | 8:40 AM | 7:40 AM | The Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Stakes | 4+ | £1,000,000 | Six Furlongs |
| 4:20 PM | 3:20 PM | 11:20 AM | 10:20 AM | 9:20 AM | 8:20 AM | The Jersey Stakes (Group 3) | 3 | £175,000 | Seven Furlongs |
| 5:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 11:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 9:00 AM | The Wokingham Stakes (Heritage Handicap) | 3+ | £175,000 | Six Furlongs |
| 5:35 PM | 4:35 PM | 12:35 PM | 11:35 AM | 10:35 AM | 9:35 AM | The Golden Gates Stakes (Handicap) | 3 | £120,000 | One Mile, Two Furlongs |
| 6:10 PM | 5:10 PM | 1:10 PM | 12:10 AM | 11:10 AM | 10:10 AM | The Queen Alexandra Stakes (Conditions) | 4+ | £120,000 | Two Miles, Six Furlongs |



ROYAL ASCOT FAQ: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

by Vance Hanson

WHAT IS ROYAL ASCOT?

One of the annual highlights of the English social calendar, Royal Ascot is a five-day fixture held at Ascot Racecourse outside London which offers a mixture of unparalleled, high-class racing, royal pageantry, and high fashion. Memorably depicted in the Oscar-winning musical "My Fair Lady," Royal Ascot is a highly formal affair where attendees adhere to a strict dress code. In all enclosures, ladies are required to wear hats or headpieces while suits with ties are required of gentlemen. Black or gray morning dress with top hats is required for gentlemen in the famed Royal Enclosure.



WHEN IS ROYAL ASCOT AND HOW MANY PEOPLE ATTEND?

Royal Ascot runs from Tuesday, June 16, through Saturday, June 20. More than 250,000 racegoers attend across the five days in normal times.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE RACECOURSE ITSELF?

Racing has been held at Ascot since 1711, when Queen Anne chose the site as an ideal spot for racing while on a drive from her nearby residence at Windsor Castle. The current grandstand, considered among the finest in the world, opened in 2006 with a budget of £220 million. The course is right-handed and triangular shaped with a circumference of approximately 1 3/4 miles. One-mile races begin from one of two chutes. The Old Mile starts from a chute near Swinley Bottom, while mile races are also held over a straight course that extends beyond the head of the stretch. All races contested at seven furlongs or less are run over a straight course.

WHAT TIME DO THE RACES START AND HOW MANY ARE THERE?

Post time each day is 9:30 a.m. (EDT) (2:30 p.m. local time). Seven races are held daily, and purses over the five-day meet will total more than £10.6 million.

WHAT IS THE ROYAL PROCESSION?

Approximately 30-40 minutes before the first race each day, His Majesty King Charles III and the Royal party are driven down Ascot's one-mile straight in horse-drawn carriages to the cheers of those in attendance. The procession ends when The King disembarks from his carriage in the saddling ring.

IS ROYAL ASCOT AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT?

Technological innovations in communications and the continued ease in transport of horses have made Royal Ascot an increasingly global event. Enticed by its prestige and prize money, Royal Ascot has attracted leading Thoroughbreds from Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Dubai, and the United States to compete against the very best from England, Ireland, and France. Trainer Wesley Ward has been a trailblazer among American horsemen pointing for Royal Ascot, primarily with juvenile runners. He's trained a dozen Royal Ascot winners since 2009. The most prominent American-based horse to win a race at Royal Ascot was the two-time champion turf mare Tepin, who beat the boys in the 2016 Queen Anne (G1).

WHAT KIND OF RACES ARE HELD AT ROYAL ASCOT?

Of the 35 races, 22 are Group or Listed stakes. Eight of these 22 are Group 1s. The remainder are long-standing handicaps, most of which have been Royal Ascot features for decades. They tend to attract disproportionately large fields.

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY 1?

Arguably the classiest of the five racing days with three Group 1 events. The Queen Anne, for older milers, is always the first race of the meet. Three-year-old colt milers compete in the St James's Palace, while the King Charles III (formerly the King's Stand) is a premier five-furlong sprint. The Coventry (G2) is traditionally the first stakes of the week for two-year-olds, while the Ascot Sakes (handicap) is one of the longer races of the meet at 2 1/2 miles.

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY 2?

The Prince of Wales's (G1), weight-for-age over 1 1/4 miles, is one of the two richest races held at Royal Ascot with a purse of £1 million. The Duke of Cambridge (G2) for filly-and-mare milers, the Queen Mary (G2) for two-year-old fillies, and the Queen's Vase (G2) for three-year-old stayers are the other Group offerings. The Royal Hunt Cup (handicap) is a figurative stampede over the straight mile course.

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY 3?

One of the larger crowds of the week (Ladies Day) is in attendance for the centerpiece of every Royal Ascot meet, the famed Gold Cup (G1) over 2 1/2 miles. The Ribblesdale (G2) is an historic middle-distance test for three-year-old fillies over 1 1/2 miles, while two-year-olds are featured in the Chesham Stakes.

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY 4?

The Coronation (G1) for three-year-old fillies milers is the traditional highlight but now shares the day with the Commonwealth Cup (G1), a relatively new race for three-year-old colt and filly sprinters run over six furlongs. The King Edward VII (G2), for three-year-olds over 1 1/2 miles, is colloquially known as the “Ascot Derby.”

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY 5?

A fifth day of Royal Ascot was added in 2002. The most lucrative race is the £1 million Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee (G1), a six-furlong sprint renamed in honor of the late Queen, who passed away in September 2022. The 1 1/2-mile Hardwicke (G2) often attracts top-notch middle-distance performers, and the Norfolk (G2) attracts some of the more precocious two-year-olds to dash five furlongs. The meet-closing Queen Alexandra Stakes (conditions) over 2 3/4 miles remains the longest race run under Flat racing rules.

ARE THERE ANY BREEDERS' CUP CHALLENGE RACES AT ROYAL ASCOT?

The Queen Anne (Mile) and King Charles III (Turf Sprint) on Tuesday, the Prince of Wales's (Turf) on Wednesday, and the Norfolk (Juvenile Turf Sprint) on Saturday are all Breeders' Cup “Win & You're In” Challenge preps.

WHERE CAN WE WATCH ROYAL ASCOT RACES AND WHAT BETS ARE OFFERED?

In addition to the daily coverage available on NBC's Peacock streaming service and Saturday on the main NBC network (on Saturday), you can watch and wager on all 35 Royal Ascot races at TwinSpires.com. Win, Place (first three or four, depending on field size), Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, and Omni (pick two of the top three finishers in any order) wagering are available on virtually all races.

WHERE CAN WE FIND MORE ROYAL ASCOT INFORMATION AND PAST PERFORMANCES?

Check out the TwinSpires EDGE throughout Royal Ascot week for opinions and analysis.



ROYAL ASCOT GROUP RACE HISTORIES

TUESDAY

QUEEN ANNE (G1), 4YO/UP, ONE MILE (STRAIGHT COURSE)

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 2025 | Docklands (14-1) | H. Eustace | 3rd Diomed |
| 2024 | Charyn (10-3 fav) | R. Varian | 2nd Lockinge |
| 2023 | Triple Time (33-1) | K. Ryan | Layoff since October |
| 2022 | Baaeed (1-6 fav) | W. Haggas | 1st Lockinge |
| 2021 | Palace Pier (2-7 fav) | J. & T. Gosden | 1st Lockinge |
| 2020 | Circus Maximus (4-1 fav) | A. O'Brien | Layoff since 4th BC Mile |
| 2019 | Lord Glitters (14-1) | D. O'Meara | 13th Lockinge |
| 2018 | Accidental Agent (33-1) | E. Johnson Houghton | 6th Lockinge |
| 2017 | Ribchester (11-10 fav) | R. Fahey | 1st Lockinge |
| 2016 | Tepin (f) (11-2) | M. Casse (US) | 1st CD Distaff Turf Mile |

COVENTRY (G2), 2YO, SIX FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|-------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| 2025 | Gstaad (7-2 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Navan maiden |
| 2024 | Rashabar (80-1) | B. Meehan | 2nd Chester maiden |
| 2023 | River Tiber (11-8 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Naas race |
| 2022 | Bradsell (8-1) | A. Watson | 1st York novice |
| 2021 | Berkshire Shadow (11-1) | A. Balding | 1st Newbury maiden |
| 2020 | Nando Parrado (150-1) | C. Cox | 5th Newmarket maiden |
| 2019 | Arizona (15-8 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Curragh maiden |
| 2018 | Calyx (2-1 fav) | J. Gosden | 1st Newmarket novice |
| 2017 | Rajasinghe (11-1) | R. Spencer | 1st Newcastle novice |
| 2016 | Caravaggio (13-8 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Marble Hill |

KING CHARLES III (G1), 3YO/UP, FIVE FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| 2025 | American Affair (11-1) | J. Goldie | 5th Temple |
| 2024 | Asfoora (f) (5-1) | H. Dwyer | 4th Temple |
| 2023 | Bradsell (3yo) (14-1) | A. Watson | 3rd Sandy Lane |
| 2022 | Nature Strip (9-4) | C. Waller | 1st T J Smith |
| 2021 | Oxted (4-1) | R. Teal | 3rd Duke of York |
| 2020 | Battaash (5-6 fav) | C. Hills | Layoff since October |
| 2019 | Blue Point (5-2) | C. Appleby | 1st Al Quoz Sprint (UAE) |
| 2018 | Blue Point (6-1) | C. Appleby | 9th Chairman's Sprint Prize (HK) |
| 2017 | Lady Aurelia (3yo f) (7-2) | W. Ward 1 | st Giant's Causeway (US) |
| 2016 | Profitable (4-1) | C. Cox | 1st Temple |

ST JAMES'S PALACE (G1), 3YO COLTS, ONE MILE (ROUND COURSE)

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 2025 | Field of Gold (8-11 fav) | J. & T. Gosden | 1st Irish 2000 Guineas |
| 2024 | Rosallion (5-2) | R. Hannon | 1st Irish 2000 Guineas |
| 2023 | Paddington (11-5) | A. O'Brien | 1st Irish 2000 Guineas |
| 2022 | Coroebus (10-11 fav) | C. Appleby | 1st 2000 Guineas |
| 2021 | Poetic Flare (7-2 fav) | J. Bolger | 2nd Irish 2000 Guineas |
| 2020 | Palace Pier (4-1) | J. Gosden | 1st Newcastle handicap |
| 2019 | Circus Maximus (10-1) | A. O'Brien | 6th Epsom Derby |
| 2018 | Without Parole (9-4 fav) | J. Gosden | 1st Heron |
| 2017 | Barney Roy (5-2) | R. Hannon | 2nd 2000 Guineas |
| 2016 | Galileo Gold (6-1) | H. Palmer | 2nd Irish 2000 Guineas |

WEDNESDAY

QUEEN MARY (G2), 2YO FILLIES, FIVE FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| 2025 | True Love (9-4 fav) | A. O'Brien | 2nd Navan maiden |
| 2024 | Leovanni (22-1) | K. Burke | 1st Nottingham maiden |
| 2023 | Crimson Advocate (9-1) | G. Weaver | 1st Royal Palm Juv Fillies |
| 2022 | Dramatised (5-2 fav) | K. Burke | 1st Newmarket maiden |
| 2021 | Quick Suzy (8-1) | G. Cromwell | 2nd Naas Fillies Sprint |
| 2020 | Campanelle (9-2) | W. Ward | 1st Gulfstream maiden |
| 2019 | Raffle Prize (18-1) | M. Johnston | 1st Chester maiden |
| 2018 | Signora Cabello (25-1) | J. Quinn | 1st Marygate |
| 2017 | Heartache (5-1) | C. Cox | 1st Bath novice |
| 2016 | Lady Aurelia (2-1 fav) | W. Ward | 1st Keeneland maiden |

QUEEN'S VASE (G2), 3YO, 1 3/4 MILES (2 MILES PRIOR TO 2017)

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 2025 | Carmers (9-2) | P. Twomey | 1st Yeats S. |
| 2024 | Illinois (7-4 fav) | A. O'Brien | 2nd Lingfield Derby Trial |
| 2023 | Gregory (1-1 fav) | J. & T. Gosden | 1st Cocked Hat |
| 2022 | Eldar Eldarov (5-2 fav) | R. Varian | 1st Newcastle novice |
| 2021 | Kemari (15-2) | C. Appleby | 1st Yarmouth maiden |
| 2020 | Santiago (10-3) | A. O'Brien | Layoff since September |
| 2019 | Dashing Willoughby (6-1) | A. Balding | 3rd Chester Vase |
| 2018 | Kew Gardens (10-3) | A. O'Brien | 9th Epsom Derby |
| 2017 | Stradivarius (11-2) | J. Gosden | 2nd Chester handicap |
| 2016 | Sword Fighter (33-1) | A. O'Brien | 3rd Naas race |

continued from previous page

DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE (G2), 4YO/UP, F&M, ONE MILE (STRAIGHT COURSE)

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|----------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 2025 | Crimson Advocate (13-2) | J. & T. Gosden | 1st Conqueror Fillies' |
| 2024 | Running Lion (6-1) | J. & T. Gosden | 8th Princess Elizabeth |
| 2023 | Rogue Millennium (10-1) | T. Clover | 2nd Middleton |
| 2022 | Saffron Beach (5-2 co-fav) | J. Chapple-Hyam | 4th Dubai Turf (UAE) |
| 2021 | Indie Angel (22-1) | J. & T. Gosden | 4th Dahlia |
| 2020 | Nazeef (10-3) | J. Gosden | 1st Snowdrop |
| 2019 | Move Swiftly (9-1) | W. Haggas | Layoff since November |
| 2018 | Aljazzi (9-2) | M. Botti | 3rd Sandown Mile |
| 2017 | Qemah (5-2 fav) | J-C. Rouget | 2nd Chartwell Fillies' |
| 2016 | Usherette (9-4 fav) | A. Fabre | 1st Dahlia |

PRINCE OF WALES'S (G1), 4YO/UP, 1 1/4 MILES

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| 2025 | Ombudsman (7-1) | J. & T. Gosden | 2nd Brigadier Gerard |
| 2024 | Auguste Rodin (13-8 fav) | A. O'Brien | 2nd Tattersalls Gold Cup |
| 2023 | Mostahdaf (10-1) | J. & T. Gosden | 4th Dubai Sheema Classic |
| 2022 | State of Rest (5-1) | J. O'Brien | 3rd Tattersalls Gold Cup |
| 2021 | Love (f) (11-10 fav) | A. O'Brien | Layoff since August |
| 2020 | Lord North (5-1) | J. Gosden | 1st Brigadier Gerard |
| 2019 | Crystal Ocean (3-1) | M. Stoute | 1st Al Rayyan/Aston Park |
| 2018 | Poet's Word (11-2) | M. Stoute | 1st Brigadier Gerard |
| 2017 | Highland Reel (9-4) | A. O'Brien | 1st Coronation Cup |
| 2016 | My Dream Boat (16-1) | C. Cox | 5th Prix d'Ispahan |



THURSDAY

RIBBLESDALE (G2), 3YO FILLIES, 1 1/2 MILES

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 2025 | Garden of Eden (7-1) | A. O'Brien | 1st Naas Oaks Trial |
| 2024 | Port Fairy (12-1) | A. O'Brien | 2nd Cheshire Oaks |
| 2023 | Warm Heart (13-2) | A. O'Brien | 1st Bouquetot Fillies' Trial |
| 2022 | Magical Lagoon (11-4) | J. Harrington | 2nd Salsabil |
| 2021 | Loving Dream (18-1) | J. & T. Gosden | 5th Lingfield Oaks Trial |
| 2020 | Frankly Darling (11-8 fav) | J. Gosden | 1st Newcastle maiden |
| 2019 | Star Catcher (4-1) | J. Gosden | 3rd Bouquetot Fillies' Trial |
| 2018 | Magic Wand (10-3) | A. O'Brien | 4th Epsom Oaks |
| 2017 | Coronet (9-1) | J. Gosden | 5th Epsom Oaks |
| 2016 | Even Song (15-8 fav) | A. O'Brien | 3rd Pretty Polly |

GOLD CUP (G1), 4YO/UP, 2 1/2 MILES

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 2025 | Trawlerman (85-40 fav) | J. & T. Gosden | 1st Henry II |
| 2024 | Kyprios (11-10 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Saval Beg |
| 2023 | Courage Mon Ami (15-2) | J. & T. Gosden | 1st Goodwood handicap |
| 2022 | Kyprios (13-8 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Saval Beg |
| 2021 | Subjectivist (13-2) | M. Johnston | 1st Dubai Gold Cup |
| 2020 | Stradivarius (4-5 fav) | J. Gosden | 3rd Coronation Cup |
| 2019 | Stradivarius (1-1 fav) | J. Gosden | 1st Yorkshire Cup |
| 2018 | Stradivarius (7-4 co-fav) | J. Gosden | 1st Yorkshire Cup |
| 2017 | Big Orange (5-1) | M. Bell | 1st Henry II |
| 2016 | Order of St George (10-11 fav) | A. O'Brien (IRE) | 1st Saval Beg |



HAMPTON COURT (G3), 3YO, 1 1/4 MILES

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 2025 | Trinity College (5-2 fav) | A. O'Brien | 4th French Derby |
| 2024 | Jayarebe (7-1) | B. Meehan | 3rd Dee |
| 2023 | Waipiro (7-1) | E. Walker | 6th Epsom Derby |
| 2022 | Claymore (7-1) | J. Chapple-Hyam | 15th French 2000 Guineas |
| 2021 | Mohaafeth (11-8 fav) | W. Haggas | 1st Newmarket S. |
| 2020 | Russian Emperor (10-3) | A. O'Brien | 2nd Derrinstown Stud |
| 2019 | Sangarius (13-2) | M. Stoute | 3rd Heron |
| 2018 | Hunting Horn (5-1) | A. O'Brien | 6th French Derby |
| 2017 | Benbatl (9-2) | S. bin Suroor | 5th Epsom Derby |
| 2016 | Hawkbill (11-2) | C. Appleby | 1st Newmarket S. |

FRIDAY

ALBANY (G3), 2YO FILLIES, SIX FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| 2025 | Venetian Sun (7-1) | K. Burke | 1st Carlisle novice |
| 2024 | Fairy Godmother (15-8 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Naas Fillies' Sprint |
| 2023 | Porta Fortuna (5-1) | D. O'Brien | 1st Naas Fillies' Sprint |
| 2022 | Meditate (5-2) | A. O'Brien | 1st Naas Fillies' Sprint |
| 2021 | Sandrine (16-1) | A. Balding | 1st Kempton novice |
| 2020 | Dandalla (13-2) | K. Burke | 1st Newcastle maiden |
| 2019 | Daahyeh (4-1 fav) | R. Varian | 1st Newmarket novice |
| 2018 | Main Edition (7-1) | M. Johnston | 1st Goodwood novice |
| 2017 | Different League (20-1) | M. Palussiere | 1st Angers conditions |
| 2016 | Brave Anna (16-1) | A. O'Brien | 1st Curragh maiden |

COMMONWEALTH CUP (G1), 3YO, SIX FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2025 | Time for Sandals (f) (25-1) | H. Eustace | 2nd Prix Texanita |
| 2024 | Inisherin (9-4 fav) | K. Ryan | 1st Sandy Lane |
| 2023 | Shaquille (9-1) | J. Camacho | 1st Carnarvon |
| 2022 | Perfect Power (7-2 co-fav) | R. Fahey | 7th 2000 Guineas |
| 2021 | Campanelle (f) (5-1) | W. Ward | Layoff since 4th BC Juv Fillies Turf |
| 2020 | Golden Horde (5-1) | C. Cox | Layoff since September |
| 2019 | Advertise (8-1) | M. Meade | 15th 2000 Guineas |
| 2018 | Eqtidaar (12-1) | M. Stoute | 4th Carnarvon |
| 2017 | Caravaggio (5-6 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Lacken |
| 2016 | Quiet Reflection (f) (7-4 fav) | K. Burke | 1st Sandy Lane |

CORONATION (G1), 3YO FILLIES, ONE MILE (ROUND COURSE)

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 2025 | Cercene (33-1) | J. Murphy | 3rd Irish 1000 Guineas |
| 2024 | Porta Fortuna (7-2) | D. O'Brien | 2nd 1000 Guineas |
| 2023 | Tahiyra (8-13 fav) | D. Weld | 1st Irish 1000 Guineas |
| 2022 | Inspirale (15-8 fav) | J. & T. Gosden | Layoff since October |
| 2021 | Alcohol Free (11-2) | A. Balding | 5th 1000 Guineas |
| 2020 | Alpine Star (9-2) | J. Harrington | Layoff since August |
| 2019 | Watch Me (20-1) | F-H. Graffard | 6th French 1000 Guineas |
| 2018 | Alpha Centauri (11-4 fav) | J. Harrington | 1st Irish 1000 Guineas |
| 2017 | Winter (4-9 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Irish 1000 Guineas |
| 2016 | Qemah (6-1) | J-C. Rouget | 3rd French 1000 Guineas |

KING EDWARD VII (G2), 3YO COLTS & GELDINGS, 1 1/2 MILES

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| 2025 | Amiloc (11-8 fav) | R. Beckett | 1st Cocked Hat |
| 2024 | Calandagan (11-2) | F-H. Graffard | 1st Prix Hocquart |
| 2023 | King of Steel (11-10 fav) | R. Varian | 2nd Epsom Derby |
| 2022 | Changingoftheguard (11-10 fav) | A. O'Brien | 5th Epsom Derby |
| 2021 | Alenquer (13-8 fav) | W. Haggas | 1st Sandown Classic Trial |
| 2020 | Pyledriver (18-1) | W. Muir | 2nd Kempton Classic Trial |
| 2019 | Japan (6-4 fav) | A. O'Brien | 3rd Epsom Derby |
| 2018 | Old Persian (9-2) | C. Appleby | 1st Fairway |
| 2017 | Permian (6-1) | M. Johnston | 10th Epsom Derby |
| 2016 | Across the Stars (7-1) | M. Stoute | 10th Epsom Derby |

SATURDAY

NORFOLK (G2), 2YO, FIVE FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 2025 | Charles Darwin (8-13 fav) | A. O'Brien | 1st Naas Coolmore race |
| 2024 | Shareholder (12-1) | K. Burke | 1st Two-Yr-Old Trophy |
| 2023 | Valiant Force (150-1) | A. Murray | 5th Marble Hill |
| 2022 | The Ridler (50-1) | R. Fahey | 3rd Two-Yr-Old Trophy |
| 2021 | Perfect Power (14-1) | R. Fahey | 1st Hamilton maiden |
| 2020 | The Lir Jet (9-2) | M. Bell | 1st Yarmouth novice |
| 2019 | A'Ali (5-1) | S. Crisford | 2nd Ripon novice |
| 2018 | Shang Shang Shang (f) (5-1) | W. Ward | 1st Keeneland maiden |
| 2017 | Sioux Nation (14-1) | A. O'Brien | 6th Marble Hill |
| 2016 | Prince of Lir (8-1) | R. Cowell | 1st Two-Yr-Old Trophy |

HARDWICKE (G2), 4YO/UP, 1 1/2 MILES

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 2025 | Rebel's Romance (6-4 fav) | C. Appleby | 1st Yorkshire Cup |
| 2024 | Isle of Jura (16-1) | G. Scott | 1st Festival |
| 2023 | Pyledriver (7-2) | W. Muir & C. Grassick | Layoff since July |
| 2022 | Broome (6-1) | A. O'Brien | 5th Tattersalls Gold Cup |
| 2021 | Wonderful Tonight (f) (5-1) | D. Menuisier | Layoff since October |
| 2020 | Fanny Logan (f) (17-2) | J. Gosden | 2nd Pinnacle |
| 2019 | Defoe (11-4 fav) | R. Varian | 1st Coronation Cup |
| 2018 | Crystal Ocean (4-7 fav) | M. Stoute | 1st Al Rayyan/Aston Park |
| 2017 | Idaho (9-2) | A. O'Brien (IRE) | 6th Coronation Cup |
| 2016 | Dartmouth (10-1) | M. Stoute | 1st Ormonde |

QUEEN ELIZABETH II JUBILEE (G1), 4YO/UP, SIX FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| 2025 | Lazzat (9-2) | J. Reynier | 1st Prix Servanne |
| 2024 | Khaadem (14-1) | C. Hills | 13th Duke of York |
| 2023 | Khaadem (80-1) | C. Hills | 3rd Cathedral |
| 2022 | Naval Crown (33-1) | C. Appleby | 4th Al Quoz Sprint |
| 2021 | Dream of Dreams (3-1 fav) | M. Stoute | 1st Leisure |
| 2020 | Hello Youmzain (4-1) | K. Ryan | Layoff since October |
| 2019 | Blue Point (6-4 fav) | C. Appleby | 1st King's Stand |
| 2018 | Merchant Navy (4-1) | A. O'Brien | 1st Greenlands |
| 2017 | The Tin Man (9-2) | J. Fanshawe | 5th Duke of York |
| 2016 | Twilight Son (7-2) | H. Candy | 5th Duke of York |

JERSEY (G3), 3YO, SEVEN FURLONGS

| YEAR | WINNER | TRAINER | PRIOR RACE |
|------|-----------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| 2025 | Noble Champion (25-1) | E. Walker | 7th Carnarvon |
| 2024 | Haatem (7-2) | R. Hannon | 2nd Irish 2000 Guineas |
| 2023 | Age of Kings (22-1) | A. O'Brien | 10th Irish 2000 Guineas |
| 2022 | Noble Truth (4-1 fav) | C. Appleby | 1st King Charles II |
| 2021 | Creative Force (5-1 co-fav) | C. Appleby | 1st Carnarvon |
| 2020 | Molatham (11-2) | R. Varian | Layoff since October |
| 2019 | Space Traveller (25-1) | R. Fahey | 7th Tourisme de Maisons-Laffitte |
| 2018 | Expert Eye (8-1) | M. Stoute | 10th 2000 Guineas |
| 2017 | Le Brivido (2-1 fav) | A. Fabre | 2nd French 2000 Guineas |
| 2016 | Ribchester (7-1) | R. Fahey | 3rd 2000 Guineas |

FIVE CLASHES TO SAVOR AT ROYAL ASCOT 2026

by Kellie Reilly



The Royal Ascot festival runs Tuesday through Saturday, with spectacular clashes on tap throughout all five days.

We'll highlight a marquee match-up to savor each day, based on what we know so far about how the fields are shaping up. But the racing is so competitive that these shouldn't be reduced to two-horse affairs, and other contenders are eligible to break into the narrative.

Consider this as a sneak preview, rather a full revelation, of coming attractions. Stay tuned to the TwinSpires.com Edge for daily selections and analysis.

TUESDAY'S ST JAMES'S PALACE (G1): BOW ECHO VERSUS GSTAAD

Although the traditional curtain-raiser, the Queen Anne (G1), features an intramural showdown between Godolphin's mile stars Notable Speech and Opera Ballo, the St James's Palace (G1) offers arguably higher stakes for the leading three-year-old milers who will put their classic form to the test.

The George Boughey-trained Bow Echo outkicked Aidan O'Brien's Gstaad when both were making their seasonal debuts in the 2000 Guineas (G1) at Newmarket. Now a perfect 4-for-4, Bow Echo is the odds-on favorite to beat Gstaad again in their Royal Ascot rematch.

Yet Gstaad has struck top form in the interim, rolling by three lengths in the Irish 2000 Guineas (G1). He also sports a prior win at Ascot, albeit on the straight course in last summer's Coventry (G2). O'Brien has made no secret of his belief that Gstaad, last year's convincing Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf (G1) winner, can turn the tables on Bow Echo.

Godolphin's Talk of New York has upset potential, considering that Ballydoyle's classy front runner, Puerto Rico, will likely set a strong gallop.

WEDNESDAY'S PRINCE OF WALES'S (G1): DARYZ VERSUS OMBUDSMAN

Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1) hero Daryz seeks to dethrone Godolphin's defending champion Ombudsman in the 1 1/4-mile highlight of the festival. While the framing in itself sparks intrigue, these two have a backstory that turns this race into a grudge match.

Their prior meeting came in last year's Juddmonte International (G1), where the tearaway Godolphin pacemaker created an unusual race dynamic. Ombudsman thrived and won handsomely, but Daryz, then an inexperienced sophomore on his first foreign venture, trailed home last of six.

That loss taught Daryz more than his wins at home in France ever did. The Francis-Henri Graffard trainee returns to British soil as a far more polished athlete riding a three-race winning streak, all in Group 1s. The pacemakers will be out in force at Ascot to see if a savvy Daryz can adjust.

The forgotten horse is the Ballydoyle filly Minnie Hauk, the near-misser to Daryz in the Arc, who was most recently a subpar fifth in the Tattersalls Gold Cup (G1). The winner of that Curragh feature, Almaqam, adds still more depth to the Prince of Wales's, having beaten Ombudsman earlier last year.

THURSDAY'S GOLD CUP (G1): SCANDINAVIA VERSUS RAHIEBB

Scandinavia has been anointed as the newest staying star for Ballydoyle. But to become a worthy successor to such legends as Yeats and Kyprios, he'll have to capture the 2 1/2-mile Gold Cup (G1). If the son of Triple Crown winner Justify appears to have the bottomless stamina for the distance, he doesn't have a great deal in hand on form.

Roger Varian's Rahiebb traded decisions with Scandinavia last season, when both were still developing as three-year-olds. Rahiebb and Scandinavia finished third and fifth, respectively, in a blanket finish in the Queen's Vase (G2) here. In September, there was only a neck between them when Scandinavia held on from Rahiebb in the St Leger (G1). Yet Rahiebb put it all together in his 2026 premiere, and the highly-regarded Frankel colt promises to test Scandinavia again in their Gold Cup rubber match.

Scandinavia will also have to deal with Godolphin's reigning champion Trawlerman, who had been questionable to make it back in time for a title defense. Not to be overlooked is Carmers, winner of last summer's Queen's Vase over Rahiebb and Scandinavia before his fifth on unsuitably soft going in the St Leger.

FRIDAY'S CORONATION (G1): PRECISE VERSUS TRUE LOVE

The Ballydoyle starlets have taken turns winning the fillies' classics at a mile, and the Coronation (G1) should furnish the definitive result.

The strongest evidence is in favor of Precise, who wasn't fully cranked when seventh as the favorite to True Love in Newmarket's 1000 Guineas (G1). Precise was behind on her timetable after a spring setback, while True Love had the benefit of a prep run. When the two crossed swords again in the Irish 1000 Guineas (G1), a fitter Precise exploded past True Love.

But True Love fans can point to a couple of reasons for hope. Precise was supposed to step up in trip for the Oaks (G1) at Epsom, until the rain ruled her out. Like Gstaad, True Love also boasts winning form here as a juvenile in the Queen Mary (G2) (on the straight course).

Perhaps the danger comes from Aidan's son Donnacha, whose Balantina resurfaces for the first time since her Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1) conquest. As a two-year-old here a year ago, she was a closing third in the Albany (G3) down the straightaway.

SATURDAY'S HARDWICKE (G2): BREEDERS' CUP TURF ALUMNI VERSUS KALPANA

Godolphin's venerable globetrotter Rebel's Romance was reportedly ready to mount a title defense in the Hardwicke (G2), but he was not in the field at Monday's entry stage. Still, a trio of runners from the 2025 Breeders' Cup Turf (G1) at Del Mar are set to renew rivalry at Royal Ascot – Turf upsetter Ethical Diamond, fourth-placer Amiloc, and 11th Goliath.

All three of those rivals are course-and-distance winners themselves. Ethical Diamond, who's improved out of sight since his hurdling days for Willie Mullins, won the Duke of Edinburgh at last year's Royal meeting, and later on the same day, Ralph Beckett's Amiloc scored in the King Edward VII (G2). Goliath, Daryz's stablemate from the Graffard yard, was second in the 2024 Hardwicke en route to his outstanding victory in the King George VI & Queen Elizabeth (G1).

But these accomplished geldings could have a formidable mare standing in their way – Juddmonte's Kalpana. An Ascot aficionado herself, as a two-time winner of the British Champions Fillies & Mares (G1), the Andrew Balding trainee was a superb runner-up to Calandagan in the 2025 King George. Kalpana was keeping her options open for the Prince of Wales's, if it happened to rain, but she's expected to stick to her 1 1/2-mile wheelhouse in the Hardwicke.



FIVE LONGSHOTS OF INTEREST AT ROYAL ASCOT 2026

by Kellie Reilly



Thanks to the sheer size and competitiveness of the fields at Royal Ascot, it's a sure thing that some longshots will jump up over the course of the five-day stand.

The notoriously challenging handicaps are a natural spot to go value hunting, and our colleague Alastair Bull will guide you through a big handicap each day. The juvenile races, with a gaggle of barely-raced contenders all developing at various rates, likewise are a potential treasure trove.

But the Group races for established performers can deliver overpriced heroes too, and the possible fields are a bit more manageable in advance.

As we begin the week, here are my five longshots of interest.

TUESDAY: COVER UP IN THE KING CHARLES III (G1)

There's a sea of sensible longshots who can factor in this chaotic five-furlong dash, and I'll include a couple more in my Tuesday selections. But the most egregious outlier in the odds is Cover Up, who is as high as 66-1 at this writing.

Trained by Simon and Ed Crisford, the six-year-old was in career form at this trip during the Dubai Carnival, and he wasn't disgraced against a big international field trying to go farther in the Al Quoz Sprint (G1). Cover Up was a handicap winner over this course and distance last summer, and the son of Exceed and Excel might be ready to resume his progress back in Europe. Note that he also gets a plum jockey booking in James McDonald.

WEDNESDAY: SNELLEN IN THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE (G2)

Several logical players are overpriced in this mile test for fillies and mares – watch for the selections piece for the final decision-making – but I'll name Snellen as possibly the biggest value (as high as 16-1).

Twice the Gavin Cromwell mare has graced the Royal meeting, and both times, she's outperformed her odds. Snellen sprang a 12-1 surprise in the 2023 Chesham S. as a juvenile, and last year, she was runner-up as a 25-1 shot in the Sandringham H.

Snellen has mixed it up with males as well, notably earning a tough verdict over the highly-regarded Purview in last summer's Meld (G3) at Leopardstown. She's been set for this target with a pleasing tune-up, and she should get her ground.

THURSDAY: CARMERS IN THE GOLD CUP (G1)

Carmers captured the 2025 Queen's Vase (G2) in his only prior appearance over the course, beating Scandinavia as well as Rahiebb. So why is Carmers 20-1 in their rematch in the Gold Cup (G1)?

The obvious reason is that a much-improved Scandinavia has since beaten Carmers twice. But Carmers did not put his best foot forward in either of those losses, and trainer Paddy Twomey now has him back on the right track. Carmers just won his prep after replacing his blinkers with a visor, presaging another bold show at Ascot. Like Scandinavia and Rahiebb, he is venturing into terra incognita at 2 1/2 miles, but Carmers is at least as well equipped in the stamina department.

FRIDAY: OUTFIELDER IN THE COMMONWEALTH CUP (G1)

The filly Venetian Sun is all the rage in the Commonwealth Cup (G1). Wesley Ward's Outfielder was only 2 3/4 lengths behind her when fourth in last year's Prix Morny (G1) as a juvenile. There's reason to believe that he's better now at three, and he's a 20-1 shot here.

Unlike last summer, when Outfielder was playing catch-up after a setback, he has built up to his Royal Ascot venture with a pair of prep wins. His stakes-record blitz in the William Walker S., back on the turf at Churchill Downs, was a particularly encouraging sign.

Bred on the noted cross of Speightstown over a Medaglia d'Oro mare, Outfielder always promised to be more than just a flashy two-year-old. If he could run such a respectable race in the Morny, at that stage of his career, the combination of physical maturity and race-fitness can put him in the ballpark here. It wouldn't be a shock if he hits one out of the park.

SATURDAY: COMANCHE BRAVE IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH II JUBILEE (G1)

While Joliestar, Satono Reve, and Lugal have all chased world sprint kingpin Ka Ying Rising, so has the somewhat under-the-radar Comanche Brave. The Donnacha O'Brien trainee has upside as a four-year-old who is just beginning to come into his own in this division. Currently about 12-1 in the British market, he's liable to remain a better price than the Australian and Japanese runners in the World Pool.

Comanche Brave had been a solid placegetter over slightly further, but his international travel early this season has apparently been the making of him. A close third on the cutback in the 1351 Turf Sprint (G2) on Saudi Cup Day, he was beaten a grand total of a length by Reef Runner and Lazzat, hero of the 2025 Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee (G1).

Shortening up again to about six furlongs for the Chairman's Sprint Prize (G1) in Hong Kong, Comanche Brave wound up a non-threatening fifth behind Ka Ying Rising. But he was a different animal upon returning home. Comanche Brave immediately broke through with his first stakes victory in the Greenlands (G2) at the Curragh, ratifying that six furlongs was his trip.

ROYAL ASCOT 2026: A LOOK AT THE U.S. RUNNERS

by Kellie Reilly



As we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, Team USA will have several chances to beat the British at their most prestigious festival, Royal Ascot.

Trainer Wesley Ward, who is single-handedly responsible for 12 of the 14 U.S. winners at the meeting, returns with a seven-strong squad after missing last year. George Weaver, also on the Royal Ascot honor roll, sends out a contender who ran well here in 2025. Patrick Biancone has a filly with a similar profile to one who placed a year ago, and British expat Tom Morley hopes to spring an upset.

OVERVIEW OF TEAM USA ROSTER

Ward's team is spearheaded by three-year-old Outfielder in Friday's Commonwealth Cup (G1). Later on the same day, Ward's other sophomore entrant, Bacio, and Weaver's Sandal's Song are due to square off in the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

But most of the American runners are juvenile fillies, including five from the Ward barn.

Ward has been most prolific in Wednesday's Queen Mary (G2), the five-furlong dash for two-year-old fillies. He's won four times – with Jealous Again (2009), Acapulco (2015), Lady Aurelia (2016), and Campanelle (2020) – and four more trainees have finished second.

At this writing, Ruiva, Fanshell Beach, and Shining Moment are expected to try to add to his Queen Mary record. Also bound for the Queen Mary are Morley's More Champagne, who beat Shining Moment on debut, and Biancone's Celtic Dispute, here by way of Gulfstream Park's Royal Palm Juvenile.

Ward is reportedly pitching Ez Tina against the boys in next Saturday's Norfolk (G2), the "Win and You're In" for the Breeders'

Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint (G1). Stablemate Through the Years is also likely to contest the Norfolk, mainly because her Coolmore-affiliated connections have others set for the Queen Mary. But watch for confirmation of plans when the final declarations come out, 48 hours ahead of raceday.

Before diving into the horses, it must be noted that Ward endured a few lackluster years in a row here prior to his 2025 absence. His last winner was promoted via disqualification in 2021, his best result in 2022 was a dead-heat third, and all his runners were well beaten in 2023 and 2024.

What might restore Ward's fortunes in 2026? He's back at the National Stud in Newmarket, after trying a couple of other bases.

"We've been here four or five times in the past," Ward's assistant trainer, Blake Heap, told RacingPost.com. "Lady Aurelia was here in the corner box, and Campanelle and Golden Pal were the same year. We've had pretty good success out of this yard. This is a nice place, and we've been lucky here in the past. Everything is right here, the town, the gallops and the July course. It couldn't be easier."

Golden Pal didn't win at Royal Ascot, but he went close in the 2020 Norfolk. Now the highly touted freshman sire will try to get on the scoreboard via his daughters Ez Tina, Shining Moment, and More Champagne. It would be quite a storyline if Golden Pal can furnish a first-crop Royal Ascot winner, especially for Ward.

RUIVA AND FANSHELL BEACH ROMPED ON THE CHURCHILL MAIN TRACK

Ruiva has emerged as Ward's top candidate for the Queen Mary. The Three Chimneys Farm homebred wired her April 29 debut on a sloppy track at Churchill Downs, pulling away by seven lengths while clocking 4 1/2 furlongs in :51.70. Runner-up Barometric, her only real pursuer who tried to take a run at her on the far turn, came back to win at Presque Isle Downs.

The surface switch should not be an issue for Ruiva, who keeps Juan Hernandez aboard. By Munnings, the same sire as Ward's classy Kimari (a two-time Royal Ascot runner-up including in the 2019 Queen Mary), Ruiva has reportedly worked well on turf.

The question is whether Ruiva's maiden win might have been inflated by the conditions. Munnings is a 17% mud sire, and Ruiva is out of a mare by 18% mud sire Curlin. In any event, she's a promising prospect from the immediate family of 2005 Horse of the Year Saint Liam and Hall of Famer Gun Runner.

Stablemate Fanshell Beach is the only "TDN Rising Star" among the U.S. juveniles at Royal Ascot. Another 4 1/2-furlong debut winner at Churchill April 28, she wasn't the cleanest away from her outside post. But the 1.44-1 second choice soon advanced into pace-pressing mode, took over, and romped by 5 1/4 lengths in a final time of :51.42. Booked, a belated second at even-money, came back to win June 7 at Saratoga.

Fanshell Beach was an \$80,000 Keeneland September yearling purchase by Hat Creek Racing. The May 7 foal is from the first crop of Corniche, the 2021 Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1) champion. Corniche never raced on turf, but he has the genes for it, as a son of Quality Road and the multiple Grade 2-winning turf mare Wasted Tears. Fanshell Beach is herself out of the multiple Cal-bred stakes winner Pacific Heat, an Unusual Heat mare who was effective on both turf and dirt.

With that pedigree, Fanshell Beach might want to go farther than five furlongs already. But she'll get every chance with budding Australian star Zac Lloyd in the saddle.

REMATCH ON TAP FOR MORE CHAMPAGNE AND SHINING MOMENT

Fellow Ward trainee Shining Moment is a Golden Pal half-sister to the prolific turf sprinter Coppola, a multiple stakes-winning millionaire and course record-setter at Horseshoe Indianapolis and Churchill. The \$120,000 Keeneland September yearling races for Qatar Racing, Breeze Easy, and Riley James Ward.

Shining Moment went off as the odds-on favorite in her April 24 debut on the Keeneland turf, only to be pressed by a rival into going too hard early. When Shining Moment ran out of steam in the stretch, she was completely overpowered by another Golden Pal filly, the 6.62-1 More Champagne.

Trained by Morley for StarLadies Racing, U Racing Stables, and Titledown Racing Stables, More Champagne was bought for \$100,000 at OBS in March. She provided a quick dividend in this eye-catching debut.

More Champagne tracked the contested pace, adroitly exploited the seam that opened up between the speedsters on the turn, and won for fun by 6 1/2 lengths. She polished off 5 1/2 furlongs in 1:03.38 and appeared ready to keep going.

Thus it's not entirely surprising that More Champagne was also given an entry in Friday's six-furlong Albany (G3), although the Queen Mary remains her focus. Her performance was arguably more impressive than the maiden win by Morley's only previous Royal Ascot shipper, Cynane, who wound up 10th in the 2023 Queen Mary.

Shining Moment broke her maiden next time out at Churchill May 21, benefiting from her experience as well as the slight cutback to five furlongs. She still went fast early, but she maintained her momentum to the wire in :56.75.

It's worth wondering if Shining Moment can ration out her speed effectively enough to last five furlongs on Ascot's straightaway. She picks up a champion jockey in Oisín Murphy, presumably because of the Qatar Racing affiliation.

CELTIC DISPUTE BRINGS THE ROYAL PALM ANGLE

Christophe Soumillon will take the ride on Celtic Dispute, whom Biancone described as a "rocket ship" when speaking to Gulfstream publicity. She has a profile reminiscent of his Lennilu, who similarly earned her ticket in a Royal Palm race and placed third in the Queen Mary last summer.

Indeed, the Royal Palm events have had an impact every year since their 2023 inaugural, when Crimson Advocate turned the Royal Palm Juvenile Fillies/Queen Mary double. The past two winners of the Royal Palm Juvenile have both placed at the festival – Gabaldon was a close second in the 2024 Windsor Castle S., and Sandal's Song was third in last year's Norfolk.

Like Lennilu, Celtic Dispute is a Florida-bred by the classy turf sprinter Leinster, himself a half-brother to two-time Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint (G1) champion Stormy Liberal. Both Lennilu and Celtic Dispute debuted on dirt before switching to turf. While Lennilu won in the Keeneland slop, Celtic Dispute lost her first start. The 4-5 favorite in her Gulfstream Park unveiling, Celtic Dispute showed speed on the rail, got hounded by Boots, and succumbed by three lengths.

Unlike Lennilu, Celtic Dispute competed in the Royal Palm Juvenile against males rather than the fillies' version. But the one to beat was another filly, Ward's 9-10 favorite Skara Brae. This time, Celtic Dispute played the role of outside stalker, scrimmaged with Skara Brae in a stretch-long tussle, and just prevailed. Her five-furlong time of :56.17 was faster than the companion fillies' race (:56.58).

The caveat is that the resemblance between Celtic Dispute and Lennilu could be more superficial than real. Lennilu was a more precocious type, according to Biancone, and Celtic Dispute stands to improve with maturity.

Celtic Dispute was purchased by Dew Sweepers for \$90,000 as a Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July yearling. The well-named filly is out of Bert's Altercation by Bertrando, from a productive Chilean family that in recent years has produced multiple graded stakes winner Consumer Spending.

EZ TINA, THROUGH THE YEARS SIRED BY WARD'S NORFOLK ALUMNI

Ward has won the Norfolk twice, with No Nay Never (2013) in juvenile course-record time and with the filly Shang Shang Shang (2018). Ward's brilliant colt Golden Pal came up a neck shy in 2020, and he'll try to make amends through his daughter, Ez Tina.

The most expensive of Golden Pal's first-crop yearlings, Ez Tina commanded \$600,000 at Keeneland September. She races for Shang Shang Shang's owner, Breeze Easy, in partnership with Resolution Road Stables.

Ez Tina is out of an Into Mischief mare who is herself a half to three stakes winners. Chief among them is Dr B, a two-time winner of the Go for Wand (G3) around Aqueduct's one-turn mile.

Dispatched as the 1.25-1 favorite in her Woodbine premiere May 17, Ez Tina lived up to her name by winning very easily. She sped straight to the lead and never faced a real question in a 4 3/4-length stroll. Track announcer Robert Geller summed it up "as easy as you like... could've won by a lot more" as she clocked five furlongs on Tapeta in :58.01.

One concern is that Ez Tina was "antsy in the stall," the chart reports, before she broke cleanly. She can't afford any miscue in the gate here.

Another possible question is that Ez Tina “scratched her leg a little bit,” Heap told sportinglife.com. “We are having to keep an eye on that. It has not healed up completely, but it doesn’t seem to have bothered her.”

File that in the category of something that might be meaningless, or the sort of thing you wish you’d known beforehand. The vibe is certainly positive in light of her recent work.

“She worked awesome on the turf on Tuesday,” Heap added, “and she outworked Outfielder, which was a good effort.”

Stablemate Through the Years will try to emulate her outstanding sire No Nay Never in this spot. Out of an Invincible Spirit mare, the Irish-bred is in the Coolmore orbit through co-owners Mrs. John Magnier, Mrs. M.V. Magnier, and Linda Shanahan.

Through the Years was unlucky not to win first time out at Keeneland April 23, when mugged on the line as the favorite in a 5 1/2-furlong turf maiden. She wasn’t the quickest out of gate, and got bumped, but she was fast enough to dash to the lead. Apparently in complete control until tiring late, Through the Years was also the victim of overconfident pilot error. That passivity allowed Tolstoy to rally furiously to nip her.

Next time going the same trip at Aqueduct, Through the Years blasted to a new course record in 1:02.62. She still didn’t break smoothly, ducking to her right from post 1. And once she was straightened up, she was far too aggressive before she was persuaded to relax a bit in front.

Through the Years will have to ration her energy better. Her placement here was reportedly dependent upon the plans for others, and a French option was also on the table at one point.

Outfielder seeks home run for Jayson Werth
In 2015, Ward won the Diamond Jubilee (G1) with Undrafted, a name evocative of co-owner and former NFL player Wes Welker. Now the eponymous Outfielder, co-owned by retired MLB star Jayson Werth, could achieve a similar feat in the Commonwealth Cup.

But in another sense, the parallel doesn’t fit because Outfielder is a fashionably-bred colt rather than a blue-collar gelding like Undrafted. The \$850,000 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga yearling has the pedigree, being by Speightstown and out of the stakes-winning Medaglia d’Oro mare Notte d’Oro. And he has claims on his lone international foray as a juvenile.

Sporting the colors of principal owner AMO Racing, Outfielder was named a “TDN Rising Star” for his sensational debut as a juvenile at Churchill Downs. He scorched five grassy furlongs in :55.93, just off Power Alert’s course record of :55.17. Outfielder had Royal Ascot prospect stamped all over him, only to come up with a shin issue that kept him home.

Later in the summer, Outfielder did ship to Deauville for the Prix Morny (G1), where the combination of a layoff and lack of experience told against him. Still, in the circumstances, he was a fine fourth to top filly Venetian Sun, Ballydoyle celebrity Gstaad, and Wise Approach, the eventual Middle Park (G1) winner.



Outfielder returned home to win a promising dirt experiment at Keeneland. Unfortunately, his attempt to stretch out in the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf (G1) was a debacle, and he tired to last behind Gstaad.

Sticking to sprinting this term, Outfielder is 2-for-2. He wired the March 21 Animal Kingdom S. on the Turfway Tapeta and reveled back on the Churchill turf in the May 9 William Walker S. Outfielder had the tactical speed to stay in striking distance of a tearaway leader and the power to keep kicking late. His time was a stakes-record 1:01.36, not far off the 5 1/2-furlong course mark of 1:00.91 set by Nobals.

His Morny conqueror, Venetian Sun, is the early favorite for the Commonwealth Cup, but Outfielder has every right to bridge the gap in their rematch. He’s in a totally different zone from his previous European venture. Ward has called him “lazy,” so it might not pay to read too much into Ez Tina’s outworking him.

SANDAL’S SONG, BACIO BATTLE IN THE PALACE

The Palace of Holyroodhouse is just a five-furlong handicap that serves as the Friday finale, but it could well be the launching pad to bigger things in the sprint division for these sophomores.

Sandal’s Song returns to the same course and five-furlong trip where he was a game third in last year’s Norfolk. Like former stablemate Crimson Advocate, the Weaver pupil earned his way into the 2025 festival by winning a Royal Palm event at Gulfstream.

A debut winner of the Royal Palm Juvenile for Dew Sweepers (Celtic Dispute’s connections), Sandal’s Song was snapped up by Qatari-based powerhouse Wathnan Racing. He performed well in his new silks in the Norfolk, taking up a prominent position and battling well to hold third. Although no match for Ballydoyle’s hot favorite Charles Darwin, Sandal’s Song just lost second late by three-quarters of a length to Wise Approach.

Entered for a homecoming in the Skidmore at Saratoga, Sandal's Song scratched and did not resurface until the April 19 Palisades S. at Keeneland. He appeared understandably ring-rusty, anchored far back after a bumpy start and improving mildly in the stretch for sixth.

Sandal's Song turned in a much more representative effort next time in the William Walker. He rallied to snatch second behind Outfielder and reversed the form with the top two from the Palisades, Reb Five and Throckmorton.

As a son of Mendelssohn, Sandal's Song doesn't figure to have peaked at two. Between last summer's Norfolk and his latest at Churchill, he has been facing Commonwealth Cup contenders. He should be competitive in the handicap ranks here, at a festival of the utmost importance to his Wathnan connections.

We'd have a better gauge of Ward's speed machine Bacio if he had drawn into the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint, but he was unable to move up from the also-eligible list.

The son of Maclean's Music and the stakes-winning Kantharos mare Katie's Kiss was a sharp debut winner on the Monmouth Park dirt last year. Switched to turf for the Speakeasy S. at Santa Anita, Bacio posted a blistering half-mile in :44.15 and just got caught late by Later Than Planned.

MyRacehorse then bought into him, and he hasn't lost since. In an allowance over Breeders' Cup weekend at Del Mar, Bacio shot clear early and drew off by 5 1/4 lengths. Third-placer Rogue Legend had placed in a few stakes, including the Windsor Castle, and he was himself a Breeders' Cup also-eligible.

Not seen again until April 28 at Churchill, Bacio beat elders in a swift :55.67 for five furlongs. But Mischievous Rogue was gaining on him late, and the pure speedball might find the straight five furlongs a tougher challenge.



ROYAL ASCOT 2026: AUSTRALIAN, JAPANESE CONTENDERS LOOM LARGE IN SPRINTS

by Alastair Bull



The five challengers at Royal Ascot from Australia and Japan – Overpass, Joliestar, Asfoora, Satono Reve, and Lugal – all have two things in common: speed and class.

It's a long way to send a horse from these countries to Royal Ascot, especially given that the prizemoney isn't any better than at home. The purses for the King Charles III (G1) and Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee (G1) are nothing to be sneezed at – \$938,000 and \$1.34 million, respectively.

But Japan's leading sprints, the Takamatsunomiya Kinen (G1) and Sprinters S. (G1), are both \$1 million races, while in Australia, there are at least five major sprints worth more than \$2.1 million, including the \$14 million Everest (G1), the richest turf race in the world.

The appeal of Royal Ascot is partly about glamour and tradition, but also about international stud value. All bar Overpass have a future in the breeding barn. It's also helpful to these runners that the connections of the best sprinter in the world (and arguably the best horse, period), Hong Kong's Ka Ying Rising, have dismissed Royal Ascot as a target, setting their gelding to local riches and limiting their overseas ambitions to the Everest.

Just to make the world pecking order clear, four of these five – Overpass, Joliestar, Lugal, and Satono Reve – have been soundly beaten by Ka Ying Rising in the past two years, on four occasions in the case of Satono Reve. Indeed, it's a shame the connections of Hong Kong's Helios Express, who has been second to Ka Ying Rising eight times in the past two years, didn't think about heading to Royal Ascot. Maybe next year.

THE PROVEN AUSTRALIAN

Australian success at Royal Ascot has been notable ever since Choisir's historic sprint double in 2003. It's reinforced the view that the best turf sprinters in the world are bred in that region – not surprising, given the focus of Aussie breeders on speed, juvenile speed in particular.

No horse highlights the Australian pre-eminence in sprinting better than Asfoora. In her homeland she's had seven attempts at Group 1 races and failed to win; yet, taken to Europe in the past two years, she's won three Group 1 races and was named champion European sprinter last year.

Admittedly Asfoora is suited to Europe's greater emphasis on five-furlong sprints, at which trip she's won the King Charles III, the Nunthorpe and the Prix de l'Abbaye; Australia has only one five-furlong Group 1 and two at 5 1/2 furlongs, with most of the Australian Group 1 sprints being at six furlongs. Nonetheless, if you put her in a five-furlong Group 1 in her homeland against Overpass and Joliestar, the other two would probably be favored.

Asfoora has not begun her 2026 campaign well, finishing out of the money in two prep races. But unlike the previous two years, she was left in Europe for the winter and moved to the local stable of Lemos De Souza. She has now been reunited with her regular Australian trainer Henry Dwyer, and an improved effort in the King Charles III would not surprise.

TWO HUGE CHANCES FOR AUS-BREDS WITH NZ CONNECTIONS

Overpass and Joliestar are both trained in Sydney and were both bred in Australia. But both horses have extremely strong connections with the other major racing country in the South Pacific, New Zealand.

Pretty much all of Joliestar's human team comes from New Zealand. Her owners, Brendan and Jo Lindsay, run Cambridge Stud, New Zealand's leading breeder in the last part of the 20th century when run by Patrick Hogan, who sold the stud to the Lindsays in 2017. Brendan Lindsay previously founded the internationally-successful Sistema Plastics, which he sold in 2016 for NZ\$660 million (\$385 million at today's exchange rate) on the strict provision that its U.S. buyer, Newell Brands, continued to manufacture Sistema products in New Zealand for 20 years.

In addition, Joliestar's trainer Chris Waller is originally from New Zealand, as is her rider James McDonald, a three-time winner of the Longines World's Best Jockey award. All three New Zealanders behind Joliestar have won at Royal Ascot previously – Nature Strip won the King's Stand (now the King Charles III) in 2022 for Waller and McDonald (who's also won other races at the Royal meet), while the Lindsays won the 2020 Diamond Jubilee (now the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee) with the UK-trained Hello Youmzain.

Overpass's connections are more Australian – his jockey Josh Parr and his ownership team are Australian – but his trainer is another

expat New Zealander in Bjorn Baker. He began his training career in partnership with his highly successful father Murray Baker, who from his New Zealand base raided Australian racing frequently and won the Australian Derby (G1) five times. Bjorn emulated his father by winning the Australian Derby this year with Green Spaces.

Both horses have made their names as sprinters, but they are slightly different types, which shows in the races they are targeting.

First to appear is Overpass, who is out to emulate Nature Strip in what is now the King Charles III over five furlongs. If there were four-furlong races in Australia, he'd be outstanding, such is his gate speed; he's raced over six furlongs most of his career rather than five, but his speed suggests he should enjoy the shorter trip.

If you looked at his race record you'd think he was an Ascot specialist, having won four of his seven races at Ascot. However, these have all been at the "other" Ascot, in Perth, Western Australia; his victories there include two in the Winterbottom (G1) and two in The Quokka, a slot race similar to the Everest worth A\$3.52 million. Significantly, the beaten brigade in his first Quokka included Asfoora.

Overpass has also been entered in the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee over six furlongs on the final day. If he starts, he's likely to lock horns again with Joliestar, the current favorite in UK betting markets, who is being saved for the Saturday race.

Joliestar had enough stamina to win the Australian 1000 Guineas (G1) over about a mile as a three-year-old, but since then she's mostly stuck to sprinting. Her bankroll of \$6.01 million isn't as good as Overpass's \$8.99 million, but the latter's figures were inflated by his two Quokka victories, and the mare leads him 5-to-2 in Group 1 victories – the latest in Sydney's premier autumn sprint, the TJ Smith S.

If you asked Australians, they would rate Joliestar the better horse, something reflected in ratings. But there's not much in it, and Overpass has beaten the mare home on occasions – significantly in the 2025 TJ Smith, where he was second and Joliestar ninth behind Briasa, and the 2025 Everest, where they finished fourth and fifth behind Ka Ying Rising.

The form book suggests that Joliestar would be the better prospect if it rains, whereas the advantage is not so great on good footing. Regardless, both are likely to be strong winning chances in their preferred contests.

JAPANESE SEEK FIRST ROYAL ASCOT VICTORY

Japanese horses have become a force around the world. But to date, victory at Royal Ascot has been beyond them. They seek to right that record in the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee with two internationally-proven sprinters, Satono Reve and Lugal.

Joliestar's owner Brendan Lindsay may be very wealthy after the sale of Sistema, but he's not in the same league as Satono Reve's billionaire owner Hajime Satomi. He is the chairman of Sega Sammy Holdings and founded Sammy, which became hugely successful by selling the Japanese gaming machines known as pachinko and pachislot.

The "Sega" of Sega Sammy is the successful video gaming company, which he bought in 2004, and he was one of the key figures in turning Sega's iconic Sonic the Hedgehog game into a hit movie franchise starring Jim Carrey.

Most of Satomi's horses have the "Satono" prefix, the most notable including Satono Diamond, Satono Crown, and Satono Aladdin.

Satono Reve has proven to be one of the best Japanese sprinters since his sire Lord Kanaloa strode the world stage in the early 2010s. He's twice won the Takamatsunomiya Kinen and was just a half-length from beating Lazzat in the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee last year. His record would be even better but for running into Ka Ying Rising four times, finishing second twice and third once.

Satono Reve's trainer Noriyuki Hori is one of Japan's most successful horsemen, best known internationally as the trainer of multiple Hong Kong Group 1 winner Maurice and Dubai Sheema Classic (G1) runner-up Duramente. He will be ridden by globetrotting Brazilian jockey Joao Moreira.

Lugal doesn't have quite the record of Satono Reve, but he did win the Sprinters S. in 2024 and this year beat all but Native Approach in the Al Quoz Sprint (G1) on Dubai World Cup night. Behind Lugal that night, in third and fourth, were Satono Reve's nemesis Lazzat and last week's Jaipur (G1) winner Reef Runner.

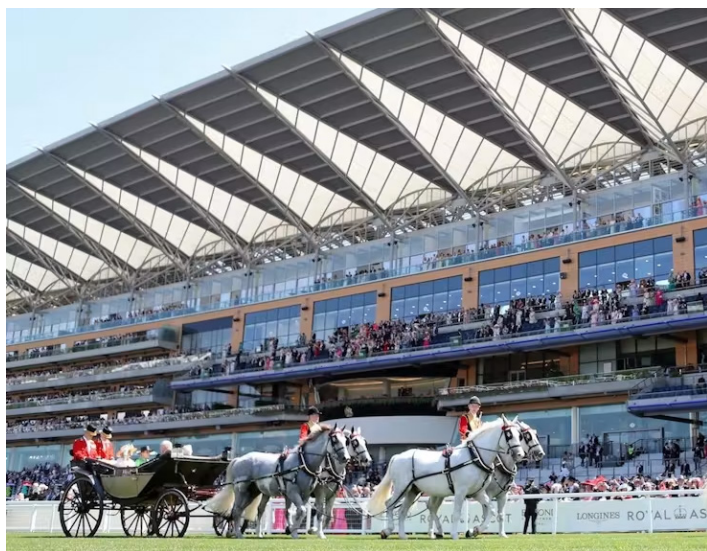
Lugal is owned by Yoshimasa Ema and trained by Haruki Sugiyama, trainer of Lovcen, winner of the first two legs of the Japanese Triple Crown this year.

By reputation and prior Royal Ascot history, Satono Reve and Lugal have a job ahead to beat Joliestar, let alone the European sprinters. But on ratings there isn't that much between all three. They shouldn't be forgotten.



ROYAL ASCOT AND U.S. BETTORS: FIVE KEY FACTORS DRIVING INTEREST

by Kellie Reilly



Royal Ascot captures the imagination because of its unique blend of monarchical pageantry, social prestige, high fashion, and the spectacle of top-level Thoroughbred racing.

The premier British festival, slated for June 16-20, 2026, has taken on even greater importance for U.S. racing fans in recent years. Five key factors have aligned to drive interest across the pond:

- American success
- NBC Sports coverage
- Breeders' Cup Challenge races
- World Pool betting
- Social media

Let's explore how these developments have made the Royal meeting more accessible and more bettable for U.S. fans.

AMERICAN SUCCESS

Although Royal Ascot has always appealed to internationally minded racing enthusiasts, it was a niche interest for those familiar with the main players. Once American-trained horses began competing and winning, the festival was no longer foreign to the wider U.S. racing public.

Wesley Ward was the trainer who proved that U.S. shippers could beat the British on their home turf. In his first foray to Royal Ascot in the summer of 2009, Ward sent out two winners, both two-year-olds. Strike the Tiger struck a blow for history in the Windsor Castle S., and Jealous Again romped by five lengths in the Queen Mary (G2).

Ward subsequently added 10 more wins, bringing his total to 12 so far. Overall, Team USA has collected 14 wins at the Royal meeting, nine of them in the juvenile races.

In 2023, Gulfstream Park created a pathway for aspiring two-year-olds in the Royal Palm Juvenile and the Royal Palm Juvenile Fillies. The winner of each race receives a travel stipend and an automatic entry to a Royal Ascot juvenile event. Gulfstream's program has already paved the way for a Royal Ascot winner, Crimson Advocate, who captured the 2023 Queen Mary for George Weaver.

But the greatest American winner is Hall of Fame racemare Tepin. Trained by Mark Casse, himself a Hall of Famer in both the U.S. and Canada, Tepin defeated males in the 2016 Queen Anne (G1) over a mile.

NBC SPORTS COVERAGE

The next decisive step came in 2017, when NBC Sports Group began offering coverage through its various platforms. The meeting thereby reached a far wider U.S. audience, beyond hard-core fans tuning in on dedicated racing channels. Now it was accessible to general sports fans and casual viewers drawn by the royal-watching and lifestyle elements.

The press release announcing the media rights deal mentioned angles of interest to Americans. The Ward-trained Undrafted, winner of the 2015 Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee (G1), was noted for his sports crossover appeal. His co-owner, Wes Welker, was an undrafted NFL player who inspired the horse's name.

While the entire five-day meeting is available on NBC's streaming platform, Peacock, the Saturday finale is also on NBC proper. As a sign of the power of the network broadcast, Royal Ascot tweaked its traditional line-up to accommodate the Saturday schedule.

The Norfolk (G2) was moved from its Thursday spot to Saturday "in order to maximise television exposure for that race in the USA," as the Royal Ascot media guide explained. There's a desire to increase exposure because the Norfolk is a "Win and You're In" for the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint (G1).

BREEDERS' CUP CHALLENGE RACES

Although the Breeders' Cup has historically attracted European stars who also competed at Royal Ascot, the two festivals strengthened their link formally in 2018. Four marquee races at the Royal meeting became part of the Breeders' Cup Challenge program, serving as "Win and You're In" events for Breeders' Cup races in the corresponding divisions.

Three of those original four remain on the schedule – the Norfolk; Tuesday's Queen Anne, a "Win and You're In" for the Breeders' Cup Mile (G1); and Wednesday's Prince of Wales's (G1), connected to the Breeders' Cup Turf (G1).

The Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint (G1) was initially tied to the six-furlong Jubilee on Saturday. In 2022, the "Win and You're In" perk was transferred to a more suitable five-furlong dash on opening day, the race now known as the King Charles III (G1).

As a result of that change, the final day was left without a Challenge event. Hence, the Norfolk was repositioned this year to restore a “Win and You’re In” to the Saturday card.

If the Challenge program provides incentives for international connections to ship to the Breeders’ Cup, it simultaneously helps to raise awareness for U.S. fans. Royal Ascot thus becomes not only an interesting event to watch in June, but a potential pointer to specific races during the championships stateside in the fall.

WORLD POOL BETTING

Awareness, accessibility, and American participants generate interest, but U.S. bettors gained additional material reasons to wager on the Royal meeting thanks to the inauguration of the World Pool in 2019.

Operated by the Hong Kong Jockey Club, the World Pool commingles bets placed in participating jurisdictions on designated major racing events into a single pool. This global pari-mutuel pool dwarfs the size of geographically limited pools, offering greater stability in horses’ odds, more opportunities to find value in the market, and potentially bigger exotics payouts.

The World Pool handle on Royal Ascot in 2025 totaled about \$200.58 million (according to the exchange rate used by BloodHorse.com), close to the meeting’s record handle of approximately \$205 million set in 2022.

SOCIAL MEDIA

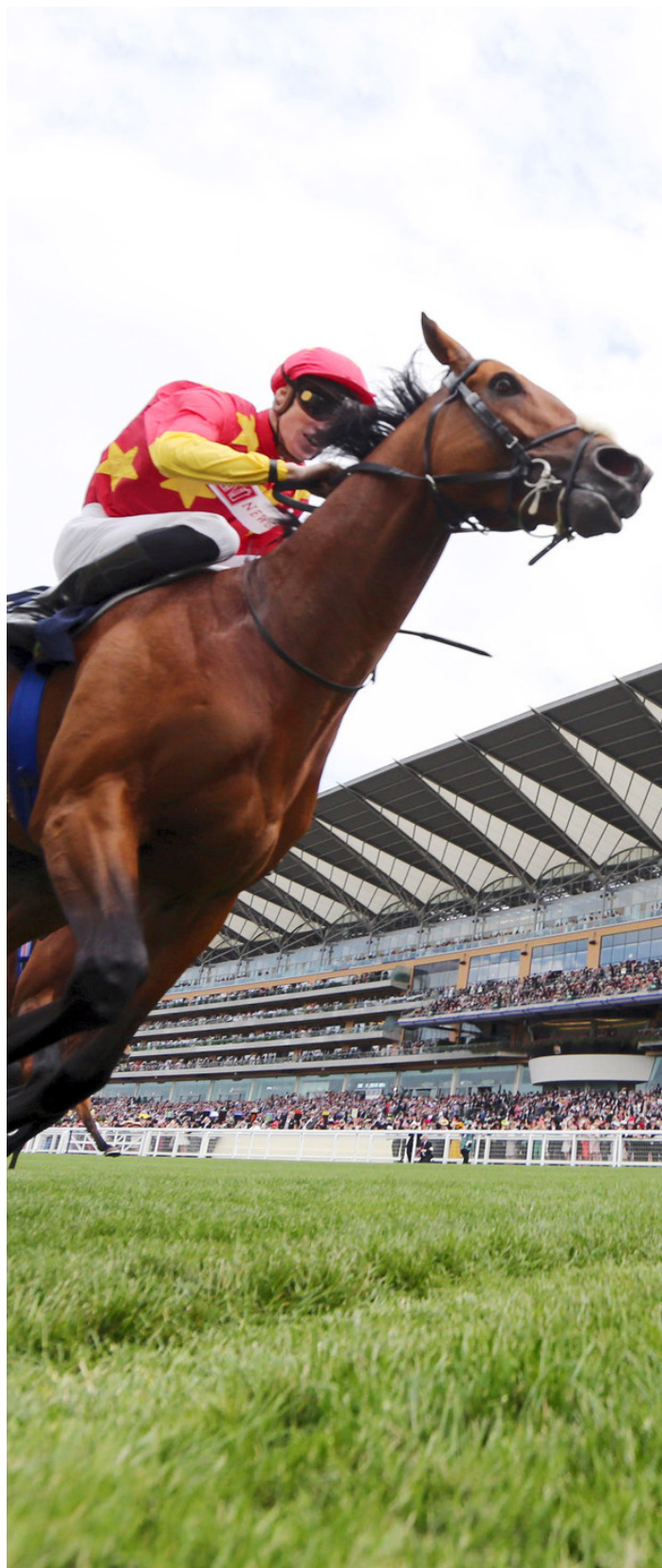
The social media revolution has amplified all these factors, making an impact on the racing world as in the rest of contemporary life.

Since the turn of the millennium, the Internet has made it possible for fans to follow international racing in real time. But these aficionados had to be self-starters who curated their own web experiences.

The phenomenon of social media over the past decade or so has expanded the reach of international racing. With sophisticated algorithms playing to users’ behavior, fans are now served up an endless stream of content from an eclectic variety of sources.

Beyond the photos, replays, and compelling stories, social media has created communities of shared interests worldwide. Racing fans around the globe are united in watching equine celebrities take the stage, celebrating their successes, arguing about their relative merits – all with an immediacy that was previously impossible.

While this dynamic transcends Royal Ascot, the festival feeds into it by featuring horses from the U.S., Japan, Australia, and Europe. The Royal meeting takes on another dimension, as an interactive, communal experience for fans spanning every time zone.

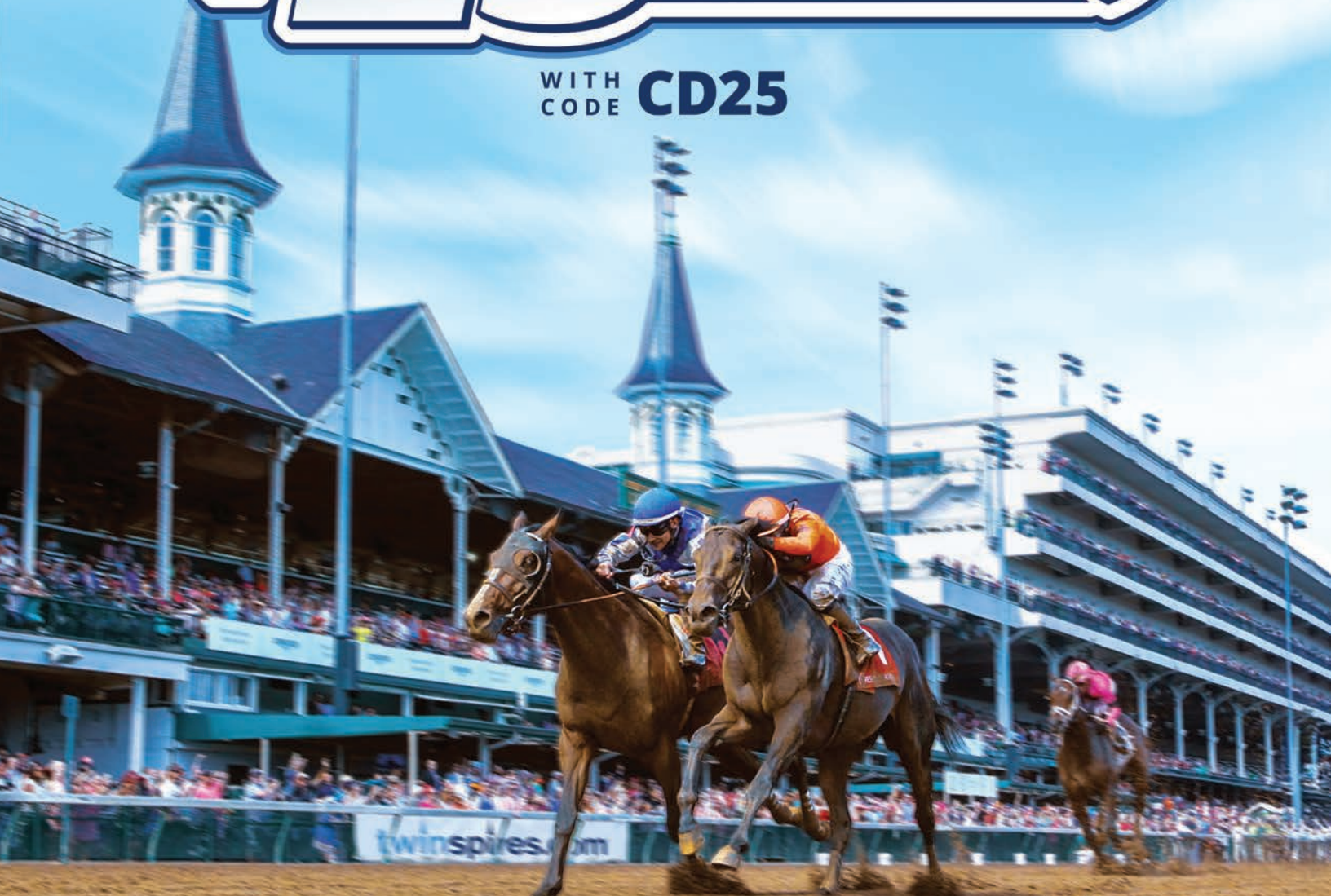


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