

NTF Weekend Notes – 18th, 19th & 20th October

Friday

300 Fakenham – Class 3 | Novices' Chase | 3m1.5f | Good | 5 ran

1st - REDZOR

Very impressive from the 6yo on chase debut and as soon as Bridget Andrews pressed go the race was over. The Shantou gelding did OK over hurdles but Chasing clearly looks his game and this was a comfortable career best on the figures, beating higher rated horses (albeit rated in the same ball-park) by upwards of 21L. Also well worth noting that Dan Skelton is pulling together some solid stats in these types of races, particularly when meeting the following conditions...Class 3 or 4 Non-Handicap Novice Chases | Aged 4yo-7yo...where he is 41/91 | 45% S/R | +£68.74 BFLSP – W&P 57/91 | 63% S/R...improving to 32/60 | 65% S/R | +£79.50 when only looking at 2017 to present.

3rd – RHYTHM IS A DANCER

A disappointing effort on Chase debut but there's potential excuses...he's yet to win over further than 2m5.5f (in 2 attempts), he's yet to win Left-Handed (in 2 attempts) and he's yet to win off a break of longer than 55 days (in 4 attempts). Enough there to 'forgive' the effort and he should strip fitter for the outing (DSLRL possibly more important to him than the trip and LH/RH angles).

330 Fakenham – Class 4 | Novices' Hurdle | 2m0.5f | Good | 6 ran

1st – RED FORCE ONE

Quick ground and left-handed tracks look prime conditions for this former flat performer – LH tracks | Good or quicker sees him with form of 123111335 (4/9, 3p – all 4 career wins) – and this was a likeable performance on seasonal debut. Paul Nicholls runners are always worth a closer look when making the trip to Fakenham, particularly under the following conditions... fields of 4 – 7 | No more than a 3lb claimer | SP 3-1 or less = 14/24 | 58% S/R | +£13.98 BFLSP – W&P 16/24 | 67% S/R.

405 Fakenham – Class 3 | Handicap Chase | 3m1f | Good | 6 ran

1st – TOUCH KICK

Another that fitted the Nicholls Fakenham angle. I had queries about this lad and his LH/RH bias pre-race (this was his first win left-handed in 8 tries) and in fairness there was no hint of him not handling going this way round. He certainly seems to enjoy smaller fields (he 1132131761241 in fields of 11 or less compared to P9744 in fields of 15+) and he could yet have more to offer from his revised mark for this win. He may just be a bit more adaptable than I initially gave him credit for.

2nd - HEPIJEU

Probably just bumped into a better horse in the winner (Touch Kick). He's been climbing the rating recently as well so he may just be near or at the ceiling of his abilities at present. His effort did, however, continue the fine effort of the Stuart Edmunds/Cieran Gethings partnership at Fakenham...10/16 | 63% S/R | +£71.97 BFLSP – W&P 14/16 | 88% S/R.

435 Fakenham – Class 4 | Novices' Hurdle | 2m5f | Good | 4 ran

1st – THE WOLF

Good to see him open his account at the seventh time of asking and on his debut for Olly Murphy. I think, and hope he's got plenty more to offer now he's found himself in the winners' enclosure.

315 Uttoxeter – Class 3 | Novices' Limited handicap Chase | 2m7f | Soft | 8 ran

1st – DIABLO DE ROUHET

A comfortable win from the 6yo and Henderson seems to have unlocked the horse's potential since it made the move from the Jo Hughes yard (1-2-1 for Henderson). This was a decent little race and the manner in which he won does give promise of yet more still to come.

7th – CAPTAIN DRAKE

I would have expected much better from this 6yo on Chase debut, but the Fry yard are just struggling for a bit of form at present (0/17 last 30 days – 3/62 last 180 days) so it's well worth forgiving this lacklustre effort. The yard isn't far away from bursting into life (had plenty of placed efforts recently) and there should be much better to come from this one when the yard are in better form.

350 Uttoxeter – Class 2 | Handicap Hurdle | 3m | Soft | 11 ran

1st – SIROBBIE

The Harry Whittington runners seem to really relish tackling Hurdles at Uttoxeter, with overall figures of 7/19 | 37% S/R | +£56.49 BFLSP – W&P 9/19 | 47% S/R... improving to 6/10 | 60% S/R | +£63.47 BFLSP – W&P 7/10 | 70% S/R when you only consider 2019. A developing angle that's worth keeping on the radar.

420 Uttoxeter – Class 4 | Novice Hurdle | 2m | Soft | 13 ran

1st – PRUDHOMME

I quite like this 4yo and there was always a sense he would improve for obstacles, with fences ultimately likely to be where he's at his absolute best. His trainer Nick Williams is a trainer I like to look out for in Novice Hurdle contests, particularly under the following conditions... C2 & below Non-Handicap Novice Hurdles | Top 3 finish LTO | SP 12-1 or less = 19/41 | 46% S/R | +£59.71 BFLSP – W&P 26/41 | 63% S/R.

Saturday

150 Ffos Las – Class 5 | Handicap Hurdle | 3m | Soft | 9 ran

1st – SPECIAL PRINCESS

I hadn't really noticed this angle previously but Rebecca Curtis has some decent stats with horses making their debut for her (after switching from another yard), particularly under the following...First run for Curtis (after switching from another yard) | LH tracks | NO Claiming jockey...which gives figures of 12/39 | 31% S/R | +£54.87 BFLSP – W&P 18/39 | 46% S/R. This one qualified on that angle. She's not yet backed up a win with another win when those runners run on their second start for her, however, 0/12, 5p, so that's worth bearing in mind, for all this one was winning from a very lowly mark and won relatively easily.

335 Ffos Las – Class 3 | Novices' Chase | 2m5f | Soft | 7 ran

4th – LAMANVER PIPPIN

This was a decent little contest to be making his chasing debut in as the others were all rated at least 14lbs better than him. He was in there pitching around 3 out/2 out and he wasn't disgraced, and he should have no trouble picking up an easier opening than this. Providing he doesn't get shifted up the handicap for this (ran here off OR 120) you'd like to think they'd find a novice handicap for him somewhere as on this evidence that mark looks relatively lenient.

415 Ffos Las – Class 2 | Limited Handicap Welsh Champion Hurdle | 2m | Soft | 10 ran

2nd – LE PREZIEN

These were bang Prime Conditions for the 8yo - 2m2f or below | Heavy or Soft | OR 150 or below = 21111211 (6/8, 2p – all 6 career wins) – and he was unlucky not to be adding a 1 instead of a 2 to that form line. He'll get a rise in the handicap for this but he's OR 149 over fences so it could be

worth heading back over the larger obstacles if they can find a race for him under similar prime conditions.

5th – CHTI BALKO

The handicapper has given this one a massive chance, dropping him a tasty 13lbs in the space of 4 runs and he now finds himself back on a winnable mark again (OR 134). He'll have needed this outing (0/4 off a break of 121+ days) and he's interesting going forward off this, especially under the following conditions...Field of 8 or less | DSLR 60 or less | 2m or shorter...where he is 111 (3/3 – all 3 career wins), Soft or Heavy ground and a Left-Handed track would be an added bonus as well.

450 Ffos Las – Class 4 | Handicap Chase | 2m5f | Soft | 6 ran

1st – JOUEUR BRESILIEN

Probably could have been called the winner from some way out and he put this to bed impressively when he hit the front. He clearly loves Ffos Las (3411 – both career wins) and races worth 6k or less (he's 0/6, 1p in more valuable races) and it may have been these were just ideal conditions for him (local track in a lowly race). He also fitted the following Rebecca Curtis Ffos Las angle... | 9 or less runners | Race worth 8k or less | 5yo-8yo | SP 16-1 or less = 61/159 | 38% S/R | +£115.04 BFLSP – W&P 100/159 | 63% S/R.

520 Ffos Las – Class 4 | Bumper | 2m | Soft | 10 ran

1st – INDUNO

Pipe has a decent record at Ffos Las with favs/joint favs in bumpers...7/11 | 64% S/R | +£4.26 BFLSP – W&P 8/11 | 73% S/R...albeit it's not going to make you rich. He's has, however, run a couple of decent types in Ffos Las bumpers, namely Gevrey Chambertin, Vieux Lion Rouge, Top Gamble, Bidourey and Taj Badalandabad, so it could be worth keeping this one on the radar.

200 Market Rasen – Class 4 | Mares Novice Hurdle | 2m5.5f | Good to Soft | 6 ran

1st – DEPUTYS OSCAR

A fine front-running performance and she's now 2 from 2 at the track. Trainer Stuart Edmunds is also starting to pull together some tasty stats at the track, particularly with those that start at an SP of 9/2 or shorter... 9/16 | 56% S/R | +£11.54 BFLSP – W&P 13/16 | 81% S/R...which gives you 9 of his 10 Market Rasen winners.

2nd – MISTY WHISKY

You'd hope she'd prove better than this in time given her decent bumper form and she's maybe another one that's just 'suffering' for the 'poor' form of the Fry yard at present. She should, in

theory, improve for obstacles given she's by Stowaway out of an Old Vic mare and she's one to keep on side of, despite the defeat here (winner was race-fit as well whilst she was making seasonal debut).

310 Market Rasen – Class 3 | Handicap Hurdle | 2m5.5f | Good to Soft | 6 ran

1st – HONEST VIC

Class 3 and below and fields of 10 or less look like absolute prime conditions for this one...12115 (3/5, 1p – all 3 career wins)... although he has run well in a couple of Class 2's and he could yet pick up something at a higher level.

345 Market Rasen – Class 3 | Novices' Chase | 2m2f | Good to Soft | 5 ran

1st – ROUGE VIF

I thought this one showed some decent form as a novice hurdler last term and it was good to see him open his chasing account at the first attempt, there's every chance he could be up to graded level over the larger obstacles. Harry Whittington Novice Chasers aged 4yo-6yo and front-run or race close to the pace return pretty solid figures...13/31 | 42% S/R | +£36.65 BFLSP – W&P 17/31 | 55% S/R...so there's a good chance of this one pulling in a couple more victories this season.

3rd – MALAYA

Was jumping well enough in the main here but he made a serious blunder 6 out and that seem to just knock him out his stride enough to stifle his challenge. He's always likely to need a run to get himself fit (0/7 off a break of 31+ days – 3/4 off a break of 30 days or less) so he should come on plenty for this and there was enough to like about his jumping in the early stages to suggest he's more than capable of winning over the larger obstacles.

420 Market Rasen – Class 2 | Handicap Chase | 2m6.5f | Good to Soft | 9 ran

1st – COPPER WEST

This was the longest trip he has raced over but being by Westerner he was always likely to stay, which is exactly what he did. This was only his tenth Chase start so he could well have plenty more to offer, especially now over these longer trips. There's a pretty neat Tom George Market Rasen Chase angle that this one also fitted... C2 & below Handicap Chase | 6yo-10yo | 13 or less handicap chase starts | fields of 11 or less = 9/18 | 50% S/R | +53.02 BFLSP – W&P 11/18 | 61% S/R.

4th – MELLOW BEN

A decent enough effort considering these wouldn't have quite been prime conditions for the 6yo... Good | field of 8 or less = 1132F121 (4/8, 2p – all 4 career wins). He's only had 5 chase starts so

there could still be more to come from him, for all his new mark of OR 145 probably gives him very little room for manoeuvre.

5th - VIVAS

Probably stuck up on a mark he'll struggle from (OR 137) given that he is 773558 (0/6, 0p) off marks above OR 130. I'd have prime conditions for him as... Chase-Hurdle Handicaps | G/S+ | Sept - Dec | OR 130 or less | 2m3f - 2m5.5f = 11112112 (6/8, 2p - all 6 career wins).

6th – SAN BENEDETO

Still needs to drop from his current mark (OR 153) before getting competitive as he's now 0/12 off marks above OR 150. This run will, however, help him back down another couple of pounds. This was his first run off a wind-op so if his mark drops and they get him under prime conditions... 2m-2m4f | Feb-Nov | OR 150 or less | DSLR 90 or less | NOT Very Undulating tracks = 1111132116335111 (10/16, 4p – all 10 career wins)...he'd be interesting.

9th - WHOSHOTWHO

Faded badly here but he probably needed the outing to blow some cobwebs away (first run for 213 days and he's 0/5 off breaks of 91+ days). He perhaps not the easiest to figure out but I think he should still have a bit of juice to be squeezed from his current mark of OR 134 (likely to go down a pound or two for this run).

455 Market Rasen – Class 4 | Handicap Novices Chase | 2m4f | Good to Soft | 9 ran

2nd – BLUE N YELLOW

I thought this was a solid enough opening effort over fences and he was probably just undone by an enterprising front-running ride on the winner. Tom George has decent figures with these types of horses in similar contests... Novice Handicap Chases | Fields of 9 or less | Geldings only | 0-6 previous chase starts = 63/209 | 30% S/R | +£111.83 BFLSP – W&P 111/209 | 53% S/R.

530 Market Rasen – Class 5 | Bumper | 1m6f | Good to Soft | 9 ran

1st – FAIR STAR

Brian Ellison doesn't send many to Market Rasen Bumpers (just 12 since 2007) but they are well worth looking out for, especially when starting at 8-1 or less as they return the following form line... 10117121 (5/8 | 63% S/R | +£13.38 LSP – W&P 6/8 | 75% S/R).

330 Stratford – Class 4 | Handicap Chase | 2m5f | Soft | 8 ran

1st – ONE FORTY SEVEN

Prime conditions for the 7yo and he took full advantage...Left-Handed C4 Handicap Chase | OR 119 or less...where he is now 1115 (3/4 – all 3 career wins).

510 Stratford – Class 5 | Handicap Hurdle | 2m0.5f | Soft | 8 ran

1st – DON JUAN DU GOUET

Well worth keeping a look out for Henry Daly Handicap Hurdlers at Stratford in fields of 11 or less as they return the following very solid set of figures...8/20 | 40% S/R | +£66.15 BFLSP – W&P 15/20 | 75% S/R. This one winning by 10L tells you just how much his runners enjoy these types of races at the track.

Sunday

230 Sedgefield – Class 5 | Juvenile Maiden Hurdle | 2m1f | Soft | 8 ran

1st – ROBEAM

A serious performance on Hurdle debut and he simply demolished this field. Brian Ellison has some extremely strong stats at Sedgefield, particularly under the following... B Ellison | Sedgefield | Aug-Jan | Top 2 in the market = 30/62 | 48% S/R | +£30.79 BFLSP – W&P 43/62 | 69% S/R...he had three qualifier on this angle this day and all three won by wide margins (those stats don't include the three winners from this meeting).

305 Sedgefield – Class 4 | Beginners Chase | 2m3.5f | Soft | 5 ran

1st – WINDSOR AVENUE

Looks seriously built for the chasing game and this was a very impressive debut. He finished second in a G2 Novice Hurdle at Kelso last season (a race that has worked out particularly well since) and he could well be up to Graded level over fences based on this outing. He's now 3 from 3 at Sedgefield, 111112 when being ridden by Brian Hughes and 5 from 5 when starting as fav. He looks well above average.

3rd – WESTERN RYDER

I think they spent a season too long hurdling with this lad and that showed here as he struggled to translate his hurdling technique for the chasing game. He has 12 Hurdle starts on his CV and that's about very near the cut-off point (for the good horses) where it becomes hard for a horse to make a fluent switch to chasing. It may come yet, of course, but I'd have my concerns.

405 Sedgefield – Class 2 | Handicap Chase | 3m5f | Soft | 10 ran

4th – BRIAN BORANHA

Probably just a shade too high in the weights at the minute off OR 133 (he's 0/5, 0p off marks above OR 130). I'd have prime conditions for him as...2m7f+ | Handicaps | OR 130 or less | 10 or less runners...where he is...13112221332 (4/11, 6p – all 4 career wins).

6th – VINNIE LEWIS

Highly likely to have needed this outing (he's 0/6 off a break of 61 days +). His prime conditions would be something along the following... 3m+ | DSLR 45 or less | 11 or less runners...where he is 2111 (3/4, 1p – all 3 career wins).

215 Kempton – Class 3 | Juvenile Hurdle | 2m | Good | 8 ran

1st - PREFONTAINE

A flat track and good ground have been where both career wins have come for this youngster (here and one on the flat). He seems to hold plenty of speed so he might struggle on more testing tracks, especially when the ground has plenty cut underfoot. It's well worth noting Jonjo O'Neill runners in non-handicap Hurdles at Kempton, especially when they start at 9/2 or shorter...7/11 | 64% S/R | +£14.32 BFLSP – W&P 9/11 | 82% S/R...which are ALL of his non-handicap hurdle winners at Kempton since 2009 (from 57 runners).

245 Kempton – Class 4 | Novice Handicap Chase | 2m2f | Good | 9 ran

1st – CELTIC JOY

A solid battling performance on chase debut from the 6yo but it's a couple of Emma Lavelle Chase angles that most catch my attention here. First up is Lavelle's record under the following...Handicap Chase | 6yo | Chase debut | SP 8-1 or less...which returns... 13/26 | 50% S/R | +£45.26 BFLSP – W&P 16/26 | 62% S/R. Next up is Lavelle's record under the following...Kempton C2 & below Handicap Chases | Fields of 9 or less | Good or quicker...which returns...9/23 | 39% S/R | +£27.56 BFLSP – W&P 11/23 | 48% S/R. Celtic Joy was a qualifier on both.

2nd – THE FLYING SOFA

You feel he should have really won more than he has (he's 2 from 11) and realistically he's 'only' won a small field maiden bumper and a weak maiden hurdle. This was a decent enough effort in all fairness so it's hard to be too critical, you just feel he's one that should have delivered more than he has so far.

3rd – TIFFIN TOP

Alan King's Handicap Chasers have really been struggling at Kempton in recent seasons... 3/63 | 5% S/R | -£49.36 BFLSP – W&P 15/61 | 25% S/R – 70% below expectation...so in some way that gives hope for this one doing something better away from the track, possibly over 2m4f+ trips.

350 Kempton – Class 3 | Handicap Chase | 2m2f | Good | 6 ran

2nd – SOLAR IMPULSE

Definitely well-handicapped off OR 127 but he'll be best suited to going left-handed (4/28 LH – 0/12 RH) and prime conditions for him would be...LH tracks | OR 140 or less | 2m2f or less | Good ground = 4/12, 3p – all 4 career wins).

6th - LILLINGTON

Really needs to be going the other way round and his prime conditions are a robust... LH | Hcp Chase | Soft or quicker | Not very undulating tracks | 7 or less runners = 11111 (5/5 – all 5 career wins).

425 Kempton – Listed | Hurdle | 2m | Good | 5 ran

1st – SILVER STREAK

An impressive victory on seasonal debut and he's now an unbeaten 3 from 3 (under National Hunt rules) when returning off a break of 121+ days. In fact, if you look at him off break of 61+ days he is 11214111. He's got very solid form figures in the Oct-Jan period...211121222...so it would be no surprise to see him holding his form in coming months.