

NTF WEEKEND NOTES

10/07/21

ASCOT

2.25 - Class 3 Handicap

This contest was run at a stop/start sort of nature and Kieran Shoemark was able to dictate things off the front end on the winner **VINDOLANDA** (1st), increasing and slowing the tempo as he liked and resulting in a bit of a 'sprint' finish. This obviously didn't suit the hold up horses in the race so the likes of BURIRAM (3rd), SPANISH KISS (5th) and VIS A VIS (6th) are worth marking up on the bare form. **SPANISH KISS** (5th) came there with a big effort in the final furlong but couldn't sustain the run in the 'sprint' finish and should still have more to offer when faced with a more suitable pace angle to aim at. **VIS A VIS** (6th) is also worth keeping an eye on as he is now below his last 2 winning handicaps marks (OR 80 & 82 - ran here off OR 79) and 11lbs below the mark of OR 90 from which he ran 4th off in the 2018 Cesarewitch. This was his first run for 273 days so it's fair enough to think he should come on for the run.

The race returned a poor Speed Figure for the class par (Proform Speed figures) but that's no surprise given the stop/start nature of the pace and although it maybe means the form of the front

two home may not stack up it does give reason as to why the hold-up horses couldn't land a blow.

Horses to note from the race...

SPANISH KISS - Race not run to suit and may still have more to offer.

VIS A VIS - Race not run to suit and should come on for first run off a lengthy break. Well-handicapped on his best form.

3.00 - Group 2 Summer Mile

Another contest that produced slow early fractions (as predicted pre-race) and again this benefited those that were able to quicken off a slow pace in the closing stages (those that made the pace or sat just off the pace) whilst vastly hindering those that were ridden colder out the back (the hold-up horses). **TILSIT** (1st) had shown an ability to quicken in the closing stages previously and in all honesty I think he was just the best horse in the race and the one with the most potential up his sleeve still. He deserves a crack at a Grade 1 next albeit he will need to improve a bit yet to prove up to landing a better race. **CENTURY DREAM** (2nd) had his Prime Conditions to attack here (**Good or softer | G2 & below = 10/17, 4p - (all 10 career wins) - UK/IRE form only**) and was also able to dictate things from the front as he liked; he's always liable to run to or near his best under such conditions. **AL SUHAIL** (3rd) remains interesting and a horse with untapped potential still. This was a fine effort from the 4yo but he was maybe inconvenienced by his wide-drawn

and finding himself a little further back than ideal at a vital point just past mid-race. Like plenty he was doing his best work late on and was probably inconvenienced by how the race panned out. Given this was his first run for over 100 days and his first run off a gelding operation it's fair enough to assume he's benefit for the outing. **TOP RANK** (4th) is a horse I like but I'm far from convinced he's a bona-fide G1/G2 operator. He's now 3664 (0/4) at G1/G2 level compared to 11231111 (6/8) at G3 level or below and I do suspect he'd need a weak G1/G2 to be actually winning one. **HAQEEQY** (5th) did the best of those that were held up out the back and the race quite simply did not play to his strengths. I wouldn't be 100% sure Ascot is really his track anyway (form of 504 at Ascot compared to 110114 away from Ascot) and he's worth giving a chance to away from here and in a race that is run at a stronger tempo. **REGAL REALITY** (6th) seems to struggle to run to his best at the top levels as he is now 0/12 in G1/G2 contests (compared to 4/7 at G3 level & below) and the G3 Sovereign Stakes he won at Salisbury last season would look a logical target again this term. **SIR BUSKER** (7th) was another hold-up horse that wasn't suited by the pace make-up of this contest and he's much better than the bare form of this suggests; he needs a decent pace to aim for.

Horses to note from the race...

TILSIT - Still looks to be improving.

HAQEEQY - Unsited by the pace make-up here and did well to finish as close as he did. A faster

pace to aim at and away from Ascot would make him of interest.

3.35 - Class 2 5f Handicap

This was run at a very even pace, with the first two home posting a figure bang on par for the class level and I'd expect this form to work out well. **SIGNIFICANTLY** (1st) backed up his Royal Ascot win in fine fashion here and the 3yo could still have more improvement in his locker. He's now 2 from 2 in large fields and it would be no surprise to see him continue to run well in similar races this season. **HURRICANE IVOR** (2nd) is well worth noting as he 'won' his side of the draw (he was drawn in stall 2) by a significant margin (the first 10 home were drawn...8-2-13-15-16-14-18-10-1-5) and he breezed through this contest in the manner of one that still has plenty of wiggle room on the ratings. **TIS MARVELLOUS** (4th) ran a sound race under Prime Conditions (**C2 or less | OR 107 or less | June-Sept = 41120010412 (4/11, 4p - all 4 career wins)**) and he's worth keeping in mind now in his Prime months, in form and on a winnable mark. He split a bunch of progressive types here and often runs well in these large field Ascot contests (4th of 18, 1st of 19, 2nd of 26 & 4th of 28 in his large field Ascot blasts). Connections have now tried **OSTILIO** (11th) over 5f the last twice but I can't say I'm convinced that is the correct trip for him and his best speed figures have come over 7f and 1m trips. I suspect Paul Midgley is possibly trying to get his mark down before sticking him back up in distance and having a

crack at a decent pot over his 'correct' trip; worth keeping an eye on as he did have some very strong form when with his previous yard (S Crisford).

Horses to note from the race...

HURRICANE IVOR - Ran a massive race from the 'wrong side' of the draw.

TIS MARVELLOUS - Handicapped to win and now in his 'Prime Months'.

NEWMARKET

3.50 - Class 2 Bunbury Cup Handicap

A huge effort from **MOTAKHAYYEL** (1st) to land back to back Bunbury Cups and from the lofty perch of OR 109. He'll need to head back into Class 1 company after this although I'm far from convinced he's up to that level (762 at C1 level to date). A Class 1 back on the July course at Newmarket may be his best chance of success at the top levels (form of 1121 at Newmarket on the July course). **KIMIFIVE** (5th) ran another solid race in these large field blasts although from a win perspective I do have the following as his absolute Prime Conditions...**Good or quicker | 11 runners or less | May-Aug = 53221112224 (3/11, 6p - all 3 career wins)**...with a smaller field on decent ground the place I really want to be backing him. He's in fine form, however, and is worth keeping on the radar. **GABRIAL THE WIRE** (12th) generally finds these races too hot for

him (now 0/9, 0p in races worth more than 16k to the winner) but he's well-handicapped on his best form and is worth looking out for under the following...**DSLR 25 or less | OR 92 or less | Race worth 16k or less | Good or quicker = 111112412 (6/9, 2p - all 6 career wins).**

Horses to note from the race...

KIMIFIVE - Running well at the minute and can strike when meeting with his Prime Conditions.

4.25 - Group 1 July Cup

A renewal that was run well above par (based on the Proform Speed Class Par barometer) and this looks likely to prove hot form. **STARMAN** (1st) disappointed on his previous try at a G1 but that came on Soft ground and he was much more at home on this quicker surface. I'd expect him to be a force in similar races this season providing the ground remains no worse than Good to Soft (ideally no worse than Good). **OXTED** (3rd) ran a solid race as he tried to defend his crown but the draw maybe did for him (drawn in 16) as he ended up switching right across the track to make his challenge on the near side and you feel he would probably have been best just charting a straight(er) course. He's another that should continue to run his races in the top sprints as long as the ground stays on the quicker side (122111213 (5/9) on Good-Good to Firm compared to 56453 (0/5) on G/S and softer). **ART POWER** (4th) gunned it straight up the far side with only one other for company so he deserves plenty credit for finishing as close as he did. I'm not

totally convinced he is a full on G1/G2 performer, however, as he is now 0/6, 1p in G1/G2 races compared to 4/5, 1p at G3 level & below. One of those that may need to find himself in a weak G1/G2 contest before landing the pot. **GARRUS** (8th) recorded the second best Speed Figure of his career here and he has been firing in some solid figures this season, no doubt helped by his wind-up in the off season. He's another I'm not convinced is a full on Group operator as he is now 0/7 at Group level compared to 5/9 at Listed level & below. A weak G2 or G3 maybe within him. **SUPREMACY** (15th) seemed to be going well enough in the early stages as he tracked Art Power on his own over on the far side but he fizzled out in the final furlong and ended up well beaten off. He's surely better than this though and I wonder if he maybe needed this run (first for 73 days) to get himself back to peak fitness. All 3 of his wins last year came off a break of less than 60 days and he is now 086 off breaks of longer than 60 days (DSLRL 60 or less = 111 compared to DSLRL 61+ = 086) so he's maybe worth giving another chance, providing he's turned out relatively quickly. He may, of course, simply not have 'trained on' as a 3yo and the G1 Middle Park he won last season maybe wasn't the strongest renewal of the race (same with the G2 Richmond Stakes he won at Goodwood) but I'd like to think he's better than this effort. He drifted markedly in the market in the 20 minutes or so before the off and he may well have looked like he needed the run in the paddock.

Horses to note from the race..

STARMAN - Likely to be a strong player in similar contests when the ground remains on quick side.

SUPREMACY - Worth giving another chance to now he has this run under his belt.

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