

**KERRY NATIONAL – Grade A Handicap Chase – 3m (4yo+)**

**4.20 LISTOWEL**

Some solid Trends at play for this early season National and I've used the following bunch to construct a shortlist for this year...

**15/15 at least 4lb lower than top-rated horse**

**15/15 DSLR 58 or less**

**15/15 at least 4lbs higher than last win**

**15/15 ran over 3m or less in a Chase or Hurdle at an Irish track LTO**

**15/15 6-26 previous Chase starts**

**15/15 1-14 previous Handicap Chase starts**

**14/15 aged 6yo-9yo**

**14/15 14-37 previous career starts**

...which narrows this year's field to...

**GABBYS CROSS - DARASSO - CAPE GENTLEMAN - JEREMYS FLAME -  
A WAVE OF THE SEA - RONALD PUMP**

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**Pace thoughts...**

No real advantage for one running style over the other... with **3 renewals going to a front-runner, 5 to a close to pace horse** and the remaining **7 going to a midfield/hold up horse...**

This is how I see the pace shaping up this year...

Horse	Run Style	Pace Map
FIRE ATTACK	FR/CP	
EL BARRA	CP/FR	
RECITE A PRAYER	CP/FR	
JEREMYS FLAME	CP/FR	
BACARDYS (RES)	CP/FR	
GIN ON LIME	CP/FR	
BUSSELTON	CP	
HEWICK	CP	
TULLYBEG (RES)	CP	
ROCK ROAD (RES)	CP	
CAPE GENTLEMAN	CP	
FREEWHEELIN DYLAN	CP/HU	
DISCORDANTLY	CP/HU	
THE JAM MAN	HU/CP	
EMBITTERED	HU/CP	
HURRICANE GEORGIE	HU/CP	
A WAVE OF THE SEA	HU/CP	
RONALD PUMP	HU/CP	
GABBYS CROSS	HU	
EARLY DOORS	HU	
DARASSO	HU	

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### Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/Other notes...

**WILLIE MULLINS** has won this 3 times and picked off 11 places (from 42 runners)...all his winners were...aged **7yo-8yo** | had **5-14 previous chase starts** | finished in the **1st 3 in a Hcp Chase LTO**... for a race form line of... 144112 (3/6, 3p)... his **EL BARRA** fits those stats this year...

**7 of last 15 winners had their last start at Galway**...furthermore...7/15 had their last run in a Handicap at Galway, were aged 6yo-8yo, were rated 137+ and were at least 10lbs higher than their last win...

That would have given you **all of the last 4 winners** and 15 year stats of...

**7/18 | 39% S/R | +£86.46 BFLSP - W&P 9/18 | 50% S/R**

...one qualifier on that 'angle' this year... **EL BARRA**

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## Conclusion...

An intriguing race as always...

**HEWICK** is obviously an interesting player... He won the Bet365 Gold Cup off OR149 in April and then picked off the Galway Plate off a mark of OR155 in July... he now attempts to land the Kerry National off a mark of OR163... only 1 horse has attempted to win this race off a mark above OR156 in the past 25 renewals and that was DORAN'S PRIDE in 1999 (also off OR163 – he finished 4<sup>th</sup> of 11)... should HEWICK manage to win from his lofty mark then he's surely a Gold Cup player in waiting... I don't think that is too far a stretch to be saying that... Only 3 horses (from 33 attempts) have managed to win an Irish Handicap Chase off a mark of above OR157 (since 2003) that's how tough the task is for HEWICK... I wish him well...

**EL BARRA**, who finished third behind HEWICK in the Galway Plate last time out (and gets a 5lb swing in the weights here) hits a couple of the trends/angles in the notes section and I can certainly see him going well... but does he maybe just prefer going Right-Handed? That's a potential (on the limited evidence we have) and would be my concern about him... for all his appeal is clear and I doubt 153 will be the ceiling of his abilities...

The two I will personally be backing, however, are...

**GABBYS CROSS (H De Bromhead)** won the Blazers Handicap at Galway in comfortable fashion last time out and in the manner of one with still plenty improvement to come (that was only his 6<sup>th</sup> chase starts and 3<sup>rd</sup> hcp chase start). **4yo-7yo Horses that come onto the Listowel Festival having won under NH rules at the Galway Festival LTO and have the same jockey in the saddle as the Galway win return some solid figures... 10/17 | 59% S/R | +£15.32 – W&P 12/17 | 71% S/R...** GABBYS CROSS fitting those stats here (as does Hewick). **Henry De Bromhead** also has some fine stats to his name at the Listowel Festival, especially with his **5yo-7yo chasers that had at least 1 previous chase start and 4-9 starts in the last 365 days... 10/26 | 38% S/R | +£67.64 – W&P 15/26 | 58% S/R...** GABBYS CROSS again fitting those stats. The horse himself has recorded all 4 of his wins when the following set of conditions have been met... **R Blackmore riding | DSLR 29+ = 1514110 (4/7 - all 4 career wins)**... and I don't see this step back up to 3-miles posing any major problems (tried it once over hurdles but that was on Soft ground).

**CAPE GENTLEMAN (E Mullins)** is the other that interests me. He's unexposed after only 6 previous chase starts and this is also only his second handicap chase start, his first coming in the Galway Plate in July, a run he'll have needed as it was his first for 241 days. Under the following conditions... **July-Feb | DSLR 75 or less...** he has form of... **11131P11 (6/8, 1p)**...and he'll have been tuned up nicely for this with two quick spins in August, one on the flat at Killarney and then in a 2m1f Chase at Ballinrobe. This is his first crack at a 3m trip and Emmet Mullins shows some solid stats with his chasers that **step up in trip from their last run, especially those aged 5yo-8yo, were DSLR 75 or less and had previously been ridden by today's jockey... 9/20 | 45% S/R | +£62.88 – W&P 12/20 | 60% S/R.** CAPE GENTLEMAN has plenty of back class already on his CV, despite only being a 6yo, and he's a very interesting player at double figures for this.