

# NARROWING THE FIELD

2026 CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL

## DAY 2 ANALYSIS

Wednesday 11th March

1:20 Turner Novices' Hurdle

2:00 Brown Advisory Chase

2:40 Coral Cup

3:20 Cross-Country Chase

4:00 QMCC

4:40 Grand Annual

5:20 Champion Bumper

- [www.narrowingthefield.co.uk](http://www.narrowingthefield.co.uk) -

## 1:20 Cheltenham

### 🏆 Turners Novices' Hurdle 🏆

#### **Grade 1 Hurdle | 2m5f | 4yo+**

Plenty of solid trends to work with in the Day two opener...

- 1 15/15 rated OR 142+ (0/93, 6p rated below)
- 2 15/15 2-4 previous Hurdle starts
- 3 15/15 2+ career wins (14/15 3+ career wins)
- 4 15/15 DSLR 28-77 (0/41, 1p out with range)
- 5 15/15 1st or 2nd LTO (beaten no more than 4L)
- 6 15/15 ran in a non-handicap hurdle at C1-C3 level LTO

...the following three pass all those trends...

#### **NO DRAMA THIS END – SKYLIGHT HUSTLE - BALLYFAD**

\*\*

**Pace thoughts...**

***Running style of previous 12 winners: FR-2 | CP-4 | HU-6***

Similar to the Supreme on Tuesday...Limited starts to work with for some of these to get a solid picture of their likely running styles... A few have front-ran to victory, but they may have just been stamping their class on their opposition and I suspect a couple that front-ran recently will sit just off the pace here... at a best guess, however, I suspect one or a mix of... **LAURETS D'ESTRIVAL, FORTUNE TIMMY, I'LL SORT THAT & BALLYFAD**... will look to sit right up on the pace in the early stages... even with a relatively unclear pace map, however, it's the biggest field in the race since 2002 and with 22-runners going to post it will almost certainly be run at a fierce gallop...

\*\*

**Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/General pointers...**

**WILLIE MULLINS** has won this 7 times and had 13 others place from 46-runners (since 2008)... all his winners were... **2-6 career starts | 2+ career wins | WON LTO**... for race form of... **7/22, 9p**... **SOBER** fits those stats here...

10 of last 12 were IRISH trained and met the following... Rated OR 146+ = 10/28, 10p | +£9.60 (E/W = +12.70)... **BALLYFAD & KING RASKO GREY** fit those stats here...

The 2 ENGLISH trained winners met the following... trained in SOUTH-WEST or CENTRAL England | OR >143 | DSLR 49-77 = 2/4, 1p | +£16.97... **NO DRAMA THIS END** fits those stats...

14 of the last 17 winners had a 70%+ career WIN strike-rate and started at an SP of 8/1 or less... for race stats of... 14/39 | 36% S/R | +£17.49 – W&P 26/39 | 67% S/R... **NO DRAMA THIS END, SOBER & BALLYFAD** fit those stats...

\*\*

### Conclusion/Current Thoughts...

Trend toppers...

**NO DRAMA THIS END** 4 from 5 in career so far, 3 from 3 over hurdles (all at Graded level)... only defeat came in Champion Bumper at last years Festival... has since won over hurdles at track so no worries about handling the course... Paul Nicholls yet to win this race (0/10, 2p in it) and he's sent 4 of his Challow Hurdle winners here, returning a form line of... 6P32 (Denman beaten as 11/10f)... so needs to change those stats if this one is to be successful (positive he's had track experience though, both Nicholls placers in this had previous track experience)...

**SKYLIGHT HUSTLE** fortunate winner of 2m G1 at Leopardstown LTO but he was well clear of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the figure he posted was a high one... steps up in trip beyond 2m for first time here, which is a small query, only 4 of the last 27 winners of this were yet to run over further than 2m2f...

**BALLYFAD** 3 from 4 in career to date and only going down by a short-head LTO in a G1 at Leopardstown... form of his wide-margin win at Leopardstown in December has been working out well enough (2<sup>nd</sup> came out and won by 9L next time out)... another that is yet to run over further than 2m2f (so a small niggle with that)...

Thoughts on others...

**SOBER** 2 from 2 over hurdles and 3 from 3 since joining Mullins last spring (won at Royal Ascot on the flat in between Hurdle wins)... Group winner on the flat when trained in France and holds a flat rating of 111... small negative as he's a 7yo (7yo+ horses are 2/66, 10p last 27 renewals) although 1 of those 2 winners was trained by Willie Mullins (like SOBER is)...

**KING RASKO GREY** only 1 from 4 in career so far but went close in a G1 over 2m LTO and finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in a Bumper at Punchestown Festival last season that has been working out strongly since (18 subsequent wins from the field, with the first 8 home all winning at least once since)... Paul Townend rides and he and Willie Mullins have some strong stats together in this since 2020... 311123 (3/6, 3p)...

\*\*

### **My plays...**

*The biggest field in this for some time... but I still think the right ones are at the head of the market...*

**NO DRAMA THIS END (P Nicholls)** as well as appearing on a couple of angles highlighted above he also meets the Chelt Fest course winner angle I have plugged in... **Won at track within last 365-days | 5yo-11yo | Won 1 of last 3 | SP <28/1 = 72/440, 93p | +£199.08...** and he looks a strong player in this...

**BALLYFAD (G Elliott)** brings solid form to the table and should appreciate this step up in trip to 2m5f...

## 2:00 Cheltenham

### 🏆 Brown Advisory Novices' Chase 🏆

#### **Grade 1 Chase | 3m1f | 5yo+**

A solid enough race on the Trends and I've used the following to narrow the field...

- 1     12/12 previously run at Cheltenham
- 2     11/12 last win came at C1 level over 2m3f-3m
- 3     11/12 ran in a Graded non-Hcp Chase LTO
- 4     11/12 previously won at Graded level

...the following passing those trends...

**KAID D'AUTHIE – FINAL DEMAND – THE BIG WESTERNER – WESTERN FOLD**

\*\*

#### **Pace thoughts...**

A few in here that have shown front-running tendencies recently... although I'd expect one or a mix of... **FINAL DEMAND, OSCARS BROTHER & PREDATORS GOLD**... to be right at the head of the pack... others also like to be on or very near the pace and there's the potential for this be run at a proper fierce gallop...

Horse	Run Style	Pace Map
FINAL DEMAND	FR	
OSCARS BROTHER	FR	
PREDATORS GOLD	FR/CP	
KAID D'AUTHIE	CP/FR	
KITZBUHEL	CP/FR	
KOKTAIL DIVIN	CP/FR	
ROMEO COOLIO	CP/FR	
WESTERN FOLD	CP/FR	
ARGENTO BOY	CP	
JOYSTICK	CP	
THOMAS MOR	CP	
THE BIG WESTERNER	CP	
WENDIGO	CP/HU	
NOW IS THE HOUR	HU/CP	
RUSHMOUNT	HU/CP	
SALVER	HU/CP	
<b>Pace:</b> Probable contested early pace/likely strongly run race		
<b>Running style of previous 12 winners:</b> FR-3   CP-4   HU-5		

\*\*

### Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/General pointers...

**WILLIE MULLINS** has won this 7 times and had 8 others place from 39-runners... his winners met the following... **6yo-8yo | 2+ Chase wins | ran at Leopardstown or Punchestown LTO...** for race stats of... **7/13, 1p | +£45.13...** **KAID D'AUTHIE & FINAL DEMAND** meet those stats here...

\*\*

### Conclusion/Current Thoughts...

Trend toppers...

**KAID D'AUTHIE** 2 from 3 over fences so far, winning a G1 by 4.3L LTO and a Beginners Chase by 10L before that... CP's went back on LTO, taking him to 2 from 2 with CP's (they stay on here)... although headgear is a small niggle (headgear wearers in this are 0/30, 2p)...

**FINAL DEMAND** wide-margin winner of his first two chases, including a G1 at Limerick in December, but fluffed his lines at Leopardstown LTO (well-beaten 3<sup>rd</sup> of 4)... beaten fav in the Turners Hurdle at last year's Festival... **Tongue-Tie goes on here for first time and Mullins has some decent stats with similar types... Chase or Hurdles | 1<sup>st</sup> time TT | SP 10/1 or less | Beaten Fav LTO = (since 2015) 14/34, 9p | +£12.59...**

**THE BIG WESTERNER** comfortable winner of a G2 LTO at Limerick, the 2<sup>nd</sup> boosting form by winning a G2 on next start by 18L... finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Albert Bartlett Hurdle at last year's Festival (that has been working out strongly since, with the field posting 19 subsequent wins between them)... De Bromhead yet to win this in 7 previous tries but 4 he sent here that won LTO returned form line of... 2U22 (0/4, 3p)...

**WESTERN FOLD** plenty chase experience in the bank already with 11 runs over fences on his CV, winning the Galway Plate last summer off a mark of OR 148... Danny Gilligan gets on well with him, with form on the horse of... 311112 (4/6, 1p)...

\*\*

### My plays...

**FINAL DEMAND (W Mullins)** 3-miles should bring out the best in this 7yo and I like those TT stats for Mullins... if the TT unlocks more in him then he could stamp his class all over this field... offspring of his sire – Walk In The Park – also have strong stats at Cheltenham in G1 & G2 Chases... 8/29, 8p | +£18.22 (E/W = +£20.67)...

**THE BIG WESTERNER (H De Bromhead)** the mare has already shown herself capable of mixing it with the opposite sex, and also shown she can handle the Festival environment, and she can be a player in this G1 Chase...

## 2:40 Cheltenham

### BetMGM Cup Handicap Hurdle

#### Class 1 Hcp Hurdle | 2m5f | 4yo+

A solid enough race on the Race Trends and I've used the following to narrow the field this year...

- 1     **12/12 OR 153-138**
- 2     **12/12 21 or less career starts**
- 3     **12/12 won 1 of their last 5 starts**
- 4     **12/12 last win came over Hurdles**
- 5     **11/12 ran in a Hurdle race over >2m1f & <2m6f LTO**
- 6     **11/12 previously run at G1 or G2 level**
- 7     **11/12 aged 6yo-9yo**

...giving a trends table of...

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOT
IBERICO LORD	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7
KATEIRA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7
STORM HEART	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	6
LUCKY PLACE	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	6
JINGKO BLUE	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	6
GUARD DUTY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	6
HMS SEAHORSE	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	6
<i>I STARTED A JOKE (res)</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	6
THE YELLOW CLAY	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	5
COLONEL MUSTARD	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5
CHART TOPPER	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	5
GIVE IT TO ME OJ	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	5
RAMBO T	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	5
DARGIANNINI	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	5
BUNTING	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	5
MINELLA RESCUE	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	5
FORTY COATS	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	5
BALLYADAM	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	4
FARREN GLORY	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	4
KOPECK DE MEE	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	4
FRANCISCAN ROCK	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	4
BECKETT ROCK	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	4
<i>INTENSE APPROACH (res)</i>	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	4

BUDDY ONE	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	3
PUTURHANDSTOGETHER	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	3
SONY BILL	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	3

...and a trends shortlist of...

## IBERICO LORD - KATEIRA

\*\*

### Pace thoughts...

Not a huge amount of potential early pace horses here... **SONY BILL** looks the one most likely to set off right at the head of the pack... with **FORTY COATS** also likely to be up there or just off him... **INTENSE APPROACH** is another potential (if he gets in as 2<sup>nd</sup> reserve)...

Horse	Run Style	Pace Map
SONY BILL	FR	
FORTY COATS	CP/FR	
INTENSE APPROACH (res)	CP/FR	
THE YELLOW CLAY	CP	
BALLYADAM	CP	
LUCKY PLACE	CP	
FARREN GLORY	CP	
PUTURHANDSTOGETHER	CP	
KOPECK DE MEE	CP	
JINGKO BLUE	CP	
GIVE IT TO ME OJ	CP	
DARGIANNINI	CP	
FRANCISCAN ROCK	CP	
MINELLA RESCUE	CP	
HMS SEAHORSE	CP	
STORM HEART	CP/HU	
BUDDY ONE	CP/HU	
BECKETT ROCK	CP/HU	
BUNTING	CP/HU	
I STARTED A JOKE (res)	CP/HU	
COLONEL MUSTARD	HU/CP	
CHART TOPPER	HU/CP	
RAMBO T	HU/CP	
IBERICO LORD	HU	
GUARD DUTY	HU	
KATEIRA	HU	

**Pace:** Possible solo leader/possible dual leaders

**Running style of previous 12 winners:** FR-1 | CP-5 | HU-6

\*\*

### **Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/General pointers...**

**NICKY HENDERSON** has won this 4-times and had 5 others place from 47 runners (since 2010)... his winners all met the following... **previously run at track | 3-9 Hurdle starts | 2-5 Hcp Hurdle starts | 1+ Hcp Hurdle win...** for race form of... **4/12, 3p | +£72.62...** **JINGKO BLUE** meets those stats here...

**9 of the last 15 winners (and 7 of the last 9, including the last 5) had previously run at the Festival** and also met the following... **3-7 starts last 365-days | 1-5 previous career wins | 29 or less career starts | ran in a Hurdle race over <2m6f LTO...** for race stats of... **9/66 | 14% S/R | +£166.79 – W&P 14/66 | 21% S/R...** **IBERICO LORD, LUCKY PLACE, FORTY COATS, HMS SEAHORSE & I STARTED A JOKE (res)** meet those stats this year...

\*\*

### **Conclusion/Current Thoughts...**

Trend toppers...

**IBERICO LORD** comfortable winner of the Lanzarote Hurdle at Kempton LTO on his first try beyond 2m4f (3<sup>rd</sup>, who was beaten 8.75L, boosted form by winning by 5L on his next start)... **form of 1141 (3/4) over trips further than 2m1f** and still very much unexposed over these 2m5f trips...

**KATEIRA** looks like one that the Skeltons have been plotting up for something... was ridden by Nico De Boinville on her run at Ascot LTO, being held up out the back AND out wide... that was only second time De Boinville had ridden her... the other time he rode her he gave her a similar type of ride on her final run before she landed a big field handicap at the Aintree Festival in 2024... Dan Skelton has sent 4 horses to this race that finished un-placed LTO and they returned a form line of... 1102 (2/4, 1p)... **she also gets her Prime Conditions to shoot for here... 2m-2m5f | Listed level or less = 7/9 – all 7 career wins...**

Thoughts on others...

**JINGKO BLUE** good 2<sup>nd</sup> LTO in the G2 Relkeel Hurdle on New Year's Day over 2m4.5f, beaten 5.5L by KABRAL DU MATHAN (3<sup>rd</sup> in betting for Stayers Hurdle) who he was 10lbs wrong with at the weights... still unexposed after only 9 career starts, only 6 of them over Hurdles and only 2 of them in handicap hurdles...

\*\*

### **My plays...**

The usual tricky puzzle and I'm happy to cover three here...

**KATEIRA (D Skelton)** looks like connections have been priming her for a spring target and she gets her Prime Conditions to shoot for, in a race the Skelton's know what it takes to win...

**IBERICO LORD (N Henderson)** impressive on his first try at the trip last time out and has plenty of large field form to help him deal with the hustle and bustle of this...

**JINGKO BLUE (N Henderson)** still unexposed as a 7yo and he could still be a good bit below his ceiling on his current mark...

## 3:20 Cheltenham

### Cross Country Chase

#### ***Class 2 Ltd Hcp Chase | 3m5.5f | 5yo+***

They changed this race up again last year and flipped it back to a Handicap, although a Limited Handicap rather than the open Handicap it used to be... the recent change means **Race Trends** are not something we can use to dig into the field this year...

\*\*

#### **Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/General pointers...**

**17 of the 20 winners were trained in Ireland...** which is 10 of the 14 runners this year!!!!

**13 of the 20 winners were owned by JP McManus or Gigginstown...** **FAVORI DE CHAMPDOU, FAKIR D'OUDAIRIES & CONFLATED** meet that stat this year...

**GORDON ELLIOTT has won the race 5 times and had xx place from his xx runners...** all his winners met the following... **8yo-10yo | 1+ previous win at track | 2+ previous places at the Festival...** for race form of... **121211P1 (5/8, 2p)...** **PIED PIPER** meets that angle this year...

\*\*

#### **Conclusion/Current Thoughts...**

Not a race I'm ever too enthused to be getting stuck into... and the switch to a Limited Handicap last year only muddies things further... I will take a swing at one though...

**PIED PIPER (G Elliott)** has some strong form at Cheltenham to call upon... 232131 (2/6, 4p)... which includes a 3<sup>rd</sup> in the County Hurdle in 2024 (off OR 156), a head 2<sup>nd</sup> in the County in 2023 (off OR 154) and a 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Triumph Hurdle in 2022... so he handles the track and the festival environment really well... and I'll take a swing at him here at lofty prices...

## 4:00 Cheltenham

### 🏆 Queen Mother Champion Chase 🏆

#### Grade 1 Chase | 2m | 5yo+

Some solid Race Trends at play for the QMCC...

- 1 15/15 aged 7yo-10yo
- 2 15/15 DSLR 32-95
- 3 15/15 ran in a G1 or G2 non-hcp chase over 2m1f or less LTO
- 4 15/15 OR 156+
- 5 15/15 27 or less career starts
- 6 14/15 last win came in a G1 or G2 Non-Hcp Chase
- 7 14/15 5+ previous Chase wins

...giving a trends table of...

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Tot
IL ETAIT TEMPS	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7
L'EAU DU SUD	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7
FOUND A FIFTY	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	5
MAJBOROUGH	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5
IRISH PANTHER	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	4
LIBBERTY HUNTER	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	4
QUILIXIOS	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	4
SAINT SEGAL	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	4
BROOKIE	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	2
CAPTAIN GUINNESS	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	2

...and a trends shortlist of...

### IL ETAIT TEMPS – L'EAU DU SUD

\*\*

#### Pace thoughts...

**QUILIXIOS** looks the main pace angle here although **IRISH PANTHER** and possible **MAJBOROUGH** may well be in close attendance and between them they should ensure a strong early gallop in the Grade 1...

Horse	Run Style	Pace Map
QUILIXIOS	FR	
MAJBOROUGH	CP/FR	
IRISH PANTHER	CP/FR	
L'EAU DU SUD	CP	
CAPTAIN GUINNESS	CP	
FOUND A FIFTY	CP	
SAINT SEGAL	CP	
IL ETAIT TEMPS	HU/CP	
BROOKIE	HU/CP	
LIBBERTY HUNTER	HU	
<b>Pace:</b> Probable solo leader/Potential contested early pace		
<b>Running style of previous 12 winners:</b> FR-3   CP-6   HU-3		

\*\*

### Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/General pointers...

**HENRY DE BROMHEAD** has won this 4-times and had 6 others place from his 20-runners... all his winners were... **GB or IRE bred 7yo-10yo's | 2+ starts at track | ran in a G1 or G2 LTO...** for race form of... **3121813321 (4/10, 5p)...** **QUILIXIOS** meets those stats this year...

\*\*

### Conclusion/Current Thoughts...

Trend toppers...

**IL ETAIT TEMPS** failed to complete for first time in career when falling at Ascot LTO... that came off the back of a winning run of 5, 4 of them at G1 level... Cheltenham form a small niggle as he's yet to finish closer than 8.7L (form of 3-5-5)... Paul Townend didn't ride him on any of those 3 runs though, he's on board here and has form on him of... **1111F (4/5)...**

**L'EAU DU SUD** meets the Chelt Fest course winner angle I have plugged in... **Won at track within last 365-days | 5yo-11yo | Won 1 of last 3 | SP <28/1 = 72/440, 93p | +£199.08...** two runs this season have seen him win the Shloer Chase at Chelt Nov meeting by 15L then disappoint in the Tingle Creek (3<sup>rd</sup> of 5, beaten 18L)... overall Cheltenham form is solid... 1412P (4<sup>th</sup> came in Arkle last season when only beaten 1.6L)... strong chase form line when not wearing headgear... 3141111 (5/7)... needs to show he's a proper G1 horse now...

Thoughts on others...

**MAJBOROUGH** very in and out chase career to date, winning 4 of his 7 but jumping errors marring a number of his runs (including when making a big mistake 2-out in the Arkle last year, that clearly cost him the win)... banged in a huge career best

when winning the G1 Dublin Chase LTO with 1<sup>st</sup> time CP's on (the remain on here)... if headgear works again and he has a clear round then he is the one to beat... for all he probably won't get to dominate the front of the race here like he did at Leopardstown LTO...

**QUILIXIOS** not been seen since falling at last in this last year when he was still bang in contention... absence not an ussie for him as he is 11211 (4/5, 1p) off breaks of 90+ days... although would be unusual for a seasonal debut to win a G1 at the Festival (stats of 2/67, 4p... both winners trained by Willie Mullins)... won the Triumph Hurdle in 2021 so handles the Festival environment all well...

\*\*

### **My play(s)...**

*Lots of 'ifs, buts and maybes' about this race this year... I absolutely won't be surprised if **MAJBOROUGH** streaks away and wins this comfortably, and he is the best horse in the race, but I'm not comfortable taking odds-on about a horse that has had plenty jumping issues previously... the CP's may have fixed that, but I'm not interested in paying to find out, so he can win without me backing him at short odds...*

***IL ETAIT TEMPS** is a horse I like but I do have niggles about him round Cheltenham... Paul Townend could make all the difference, but I'm in two minds if that's the key to him (rather than the track not suiting)...*

*Which leaves me with...*

**L'EAU DU SUD (D Skelton)** 2 wide margin wins and a close 4<sup>th</sup> in the Arkle from his 3 chase starts at the track tells us he handles these fences well and he's who I'll side with here, he's the one I have the least reservations about in the race...

## 4:40 Cheltenham

### Grand Annual Handicap Chase

#### ***Class 1 Hcp Chase | 2m | 5yo+***

Has become a little bit of a tricky one on the trends... but I settled on the following...

- 1 15/15 previously run at G1 or G2 level
- 2 15/15 2-7 career wins
- 3 15/15 DSLR 26+
- 4 15/15 carried 11-08 or less
- 5 15/15 11+ career starts
- 6 14/15 4-8 starts last 365-days
- 7 13/15 13 or less Chase starts

...giving a trends shortlist of...

**BE AWARE – INTHEPOCKET – JAZZY MATTY – WESTERN DIEGO –  
SPECIAL CADEAU – THE OTHER MOZZIE**

\*\*

#### **Pace thoughts...**

**RUBAUD** will almost certainly look to go from the front in this... with the likes of **BE AWARE, PERSONAL AMBITION & TOUCH ME NOT** also right up there or possibly sitting right on his tail... they almost always go off at an intense gallop in the Grand Annual and there's more than enough in the way of early pace horses to think it will be no different this year...

Horse	Run Style	Pace Map
RUBAUD	FR	
BE AWARE	FR/CP	
PERSONAL AMBITION	FR/CP	
TOUCH ME NOT	CP/FR	
CALICO	CP	
INTHEPOCKET	CP	
ADDRAGOOLE	CP	
VANDERPOEL	CP	
JOUR D'EVASION	CP	
RELIEVED OF DUTIES	CP	
RYANS ROCKET (res)	CP	
SPECIAL CADEAU	CP/HU	
JASKO DES DAMES	CP/HU	
JAZZY MATTY	HU/CP	
WESTERN DIEGO	HU/CP	
THE OTHER MOZZIE	HU/CP	
BALLYSAX HANK	HU/CP	
BREAK MY SOUL	HU/CP	
RELEASE THE BEAST	HU/CP	
GOLDEN JOY (res)	HU/CP	
BOOTHILL	HU	
MARTATOR	HU	
<b>Pace:</b> Possible contested early lead/potential solo leader		
<b>Running style of previous 12 winners:</b> FR-1   CP-5   HU-6		

\*\*

### Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/General pointers...

**HARRY COBDEN** has some solid stats in similar handicaps at Cheltenham since 2023... **H Cobden | Cheltenham Hcp Chases over 2m5f or less | November – March | 4yo-8yo's = 11/23 | 48% S/R | +£60.58 – W&P 14/23 | 61% S/R... RUBAUD** meets that angle here...

\*\*

### Conclusion/Current Thoughts...

Trend toppers...

**BE AWARE** the Skelton's have likely had this race in mind for some time for the 7yo and he does the Dan Skelton Chelt Fest Hcp Angle I have plugged in... **D Skelton | Chelt Fest Hcps | horses with 1+ course run | 2+ career hcp runs | 1+ NH code Hcp run | 0-1 seasonal wins | 2-5 seasonal runs = 7/28, 7p | +£166.06...** been running well in Graded Chases, handled the fences well when finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> at the November meeting and no concerns about the conditions he faces here...

**JAZZY MATTY** won race last year off an 8lb lower mark... 2 from 2 at Festival having also won the Fred Winter in 2023 and overall Cheltenham form reads well... 5121 (5<sup>th</sup> came in 20-runner field and 2<sup>nd</sup> was a head defeat when weights bang against him)... warmed up for this over Hurdles at Thurles in January as he did for race last year... meets the 'Previously Won or Placed in SAME race' angle that I posted last week... and looks like they've been priming him to peak in this race again...

**INTHEPOCKET** lightly raced for a 9yo, with only 12 starts, 7 over fences, only 3 in Hcp Chases... finished 4<sup>th</sup> in Supreme in 2023 then backed that up by winning G1 Top Novices Hurdle at Aintree on next start, so has plenty back-class to call upon...

**WESTERN DIEGO** won a G3 Hcp at Fairyhouse in January over 2m1f to open his chase account at 7<sup>th</sup> time of asking... hard to properly assess but might be at best... in Jan-March over 2m3f or less = 4123171 (3/7, 2p – all 3 career wins)...

**SPECIAL CADEAU** will appreciate any further drying of the ground as both wins to date have come on Good (for all he does act on softer)... his Prime Conditions are possibly somewhere around the following... **2m1f or less | fields of 9+ | DSLR 31+ = 2/8, 4p – both career wins**)...

**THE OTHER MOZZIE** finished 7<sup>th</sup> in Jack Richards Nov Chase at last year's meeting, which was a better effort than finishing position suggested as he was inconvenienced by a scrappy starting procedure... not shown much in 4 starts so far this season...

Thoughts on others...

**RUBAUD** 4 starts this season have come over Hurdles after a solid enough chasing campaign last year... interesting they come back chasing with him here and he does have good form under the conditions... **G2 level or less | Good-G/S | Cobden riding = 11/14 – all 11 career wins... also some decent enough stats for horses in this that ran over HURDLES LTO, were IRE or FR bred and finished top 6 LTO... 6/23, 3p | +£55.50 (E/W = +£79.12)**... (JAZZY MATTY also meets that 'micro-angle')...

\*\*

**My plays...**

Happy to play 3 in this ultra-competitive handicap...

**BE AWARE (D Skelton)** another Skelton horse that looks to have been teased along with a spring hcp in mind and they look to have got him here on a decent mark...

**JAZZY MATTY (C Collins)** I suspect they've been protecting his chase mark since winning this last year and it's telling the CP's go back on, the 2 times he's had CP's on having NOT worn them LTO saw him win this last year and win the Fred Winter handicap in 2023...

**SPECIAL CADEAU (H De Bromhead)** should appreciate the conditions and goes well off breaks and in double figure fields, looks interesting at big odds...

## 5:20 Cheltenham

### **Champion Bumper**

#### **Grade 1 Bumper | 2m0.5f | 4yo-6yo**

Can be a difficult race to get a handle on due to the limited form of the runners... but the following trends do look well worth making use of...

- 1      **15/15 rated OR 118+ (0/83 rated OR 117 or less)**
- 2      **15/15 WON a bumper at an Irish track or track in Southern England LTO by at least 1L (0/171 those that didn't fit stat)**
- 3      **15/15 67%+ Bumper W&P S/R (14/15 100% W&P S/R)**
- 4      **15/15 either DIDN'T run in a P2P or had WON a P2P (6 ran in 1 P2P the other ran in 2 P2P's)**
- 5      **15/15 made their rules debut aged 4yo or 5yo (0/29, 1p those that didn't)**
- 6      **15/15 aged 5yo or 6yo (0/39, 3p out with range)**

...for a trends shortlist of...

**LOVE SIGN DAUNOU – KEEP HIM COMPANY – BASS HUNTER**

\*\*

Pace thoughts...

**Running style of previous 12 winners: FR-1 | CP-1 | HU-10**

\*\*

Trainer notes/Jockey notes/Horse notes/General pointers...

Since 2013 LTOW's that were also the top-rated horse returned race form of... 10112221501163 (6/14, 4p)... **BROADWAY TED** meets those stats this year...

Horses aged 5yo-6yo that won their last two starts (both those runs coming in Ireland) have won 7 of the last 9 renewals... for overall stats of... 7/19, 5p | +£39.54... **KEEP HIM COMPANY & MOONVERRIN** meet those stats this year...

\*\*

## **Conclusion/Current Thoughts...**

Not one of my favourite races to play in... but the trends are strong and do regularly hold up year after year... I'll tentatively play the following...

**KEEP HIM COMPANY (G Elliott)** posted a strong figure when winning LTO and looks the logical choice given that he qualifies on the main Race Trends and one of the other angles I highlight above...

**LOVE SIGN D'AUNOU (W Mullins)** demolished his rivals by 24L on his rules debut LTO at Naas and Patrick Mullins has some strong stats when riding one for his dad in this race and they meet the following... **5yo Irish or FR bred | 1 run in calendar year | WON LTO as fav = 11541P01 (4/8, 1p)**... stats that this 5yo meets here...



[www.narrowingthefield.co.uk](http://www.narrowingthefield.co.uk)