

**Below follows my September article for The Betting Insiders Club. Those who run this club allow me to publish this article for my own Members Club. You can find out more about their club [HERE>>>](#)**

**To the article...**

### **A Handicap Hurdle Portfolio?**

I for one am looking forward to the return of the jumps season proper and with that in mind I thought I would start to cast my eye to the winter game.

The focus of this article will be on handicap hurdles and I will look at various 'training methods' to see if we can uncover any useful micro angles that we can follow throughout the winter. The areas I will look at include: returning within 7 days/ 60+ days off/distance move/class move/handicap debut/change of yard/last time out winner/one runner at the track/zero previous wins in hurdles/top weights.

I have no idea what I am about to find but hopefully it will be useful...

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Starting point...

The starting set of data:-

- Handicap Hurdles Only (not handicap novice hurdles, handicap sellers etc)
- 2013/14/15/16-
- October-April (the main winter jumps season)

### **Rest Patterns**

Horse Ran: 1-7 days ago

There are three trainers in the period with 5 or more winners as follows:-

- D Pipe: 19 bets / 7 wins / 9 place s/ 37% sr / +3 SP / +3 BFSP / AE 1.45
- A J Honeyball: 11 bets / 5 wins / 8 places / 45% sr / +1 SP / +2 BFSP / AE 1.12
- Johnny Farrelly: 8 bets / 5 wins / 5 places / 63% sr / +15 SP / +16 BFSP / AE 2.6

Those are solid stats to keep onside. It could be noted that David Pipe does especially well with those who won last time out...

So, his handicap hurdlers, returning 1-7 days, won LTO:-

9 bets / 6 wins / 6 places / 67% sr / +10 SP / +10 BFSP / AE 1.87

BUT...you could also look at all of his national hunt handicappers...

- David Pipe
- All national hunt handicaps
- 2013- , Oct-April
- Ran 1-7 days ago
- WON LTO

19 bets / 10 wins / 12 places / 53% sr / +11 SP / +10 BFSP / AE 1.5

None of these three trainers will make you especially rich but the odd one opens at a decent price and many are well backed. It is also useful to know if you are ever tempted to take on one of their 'quick returners' in handicap hurdles.

Clearly there won't be many bets but they should be worth following when they do reappear.

Horse Ran: 60+ days ago (60 or more days ago)

Without any further digging there are nine trainers who caught my eye...

Trainer	Bets	Wins	Win%	P/L(SP)	Places	Place%	Races	Race%	ROI(SP)	P/L(BF)	P/L(Plc)	MxOdd	A/E
Pipe, D E	135	20	14.81	58.75	46	34.07	126	15.87	43.52	91	26.83	41.00	0.95
Williams, Evan	87	15	17.24	59.63	22	25.29	83	18.07	68.54	81.8	-4.63	51.00	1.49
Skelton, Daniel	59	14	23.73	25	24	40.68	58	24.14	42.37	36.06	19.55	26.00	1.53
Honeyball, A J	38	10	26.32	27.02	18	47.37	37	27.03	71.11	37.11	16.83	41.00	1.57
Daly, H D	33	6	18.18	55.5	11	33.33	33	18.18	168.18	66.12	6.56	41.00	1.42
Symonds, Tom	30	6	20	32.38	13	43.33	30	20	107.93	61.66	21.48	51.00	2.07
Whillans, D W	21	5	23.81	42	8	38.1	21	23.81	200	53.98	6.91	41.00	2.36
Dalglish, Keith	11	5	45.45	20.5	6	54.55	11	45.45	186.36	23.26	3.27	29.00	3.55

A quick look at the two most prolific amongst them...

## David Pipe

You could just focus on those returning in November:

38 bets / 8 wins / 14 places / 21% sr / +56 SP / +72 BFSP / AE 1.48

He was 0/10, 1 place last year and if my memory is correct his horses may not have been going well at that point. One to keep an eye on this November.

More specifically those returning at Cheltenham in November: 13 bets / 3 wins / 5 places / 23% sr / +38 SP / +49 BFSP / AE 2.07

## Evan Williams

His handicap hurdlers returning at class 3 and class 2 level are worth more serious consideration...

45 bets / 11 wins / 14 places / 24% sr / +77 SP / +96 BFSP / AE 2.17

(those going off 25/1 or bigger within this angle: 0/8, 1 place)

## Distance Move (from last run)

David Pipe appears to be somewhat of a master when moving his horses by around half a mile either down in distance or up in distance...

- Down 4.5 or 5f: 21 bets / 7 wins / 14 places / 33% sr / +44 SP / +56 BFSP / AE 1.72
- UP 4.5f or 5f: 27 bets / 8 wins / 13 places / 30% sr / +38 SP / +51 BFSP / AE 1.99

Combined this leaves an impressive looking...

	Bets	Wins	Win%	P/L(SP)	Places	Place%	Races	Race%	ROI(SP)	P/L(BF)	Plc(BF)	P/L(Plc)	A/E
ALL	48	15	31.25	81.51	27	56.25	48	31.25	169.81	107.15	28	36.9	1.85
2016	7	5	71.43	52	5	71.43	7	71.43	742.86	64.75	6	12.18	5.62
2015	16	5	31.25	24.26	10	62.5	16	31.25	151.63	34.78	10	21.69	1.77
2014	13	4	30.77	9.25	8	61.54	13	30.77	71.15	11.19	8	6	1.84
2013	12	1	8.33	-4	4	33.33	12	8.33	-33.33	-3.56	4	-2.97	0.45

### Class Move (from last run)

Jonjo O'Neill looks like he may be the trainer to focus on when it comes to moving a horse in class from its last run....

- Up 1 class: 77 bets / 15 wins / 25 places / 19% sr / +22 SP / +34 BFSP / AE 1.26

These stats do include one winner at 25/1. In fact those going off at 11/1 or bigger are 1/27, 3 places.. -1 SP.

That means those more fancied runners, 10/1 or under SP:

50 bets / 14 wins / 22 places / 28% sr / +23 SP / +31 BFSP / AE 1.33

### Handicap Hurdle Debut

This is always an interesting area to look at and undoubtedly some trainers ensure their horses are 'well in' when tackling handicap company for the first time. As always there are trainers who are better at this than others. It may be worth focussing some of your attention on the following three trainers...

Trainer	Bets	Wins	Win%	P/L(SP)	Places	Place%	Races	Race%	ROI(SP)	P/L(BF)	P/L(Plc)	A/E
Richards, N G	19	7	36.84	20.75	7	36.84	19	36.84	109.21	24.44	-1.86	1.97
Honeyball, A J	19	7	36.84	48.63	12	63.16	19	36.84	255.95	59.93	19.65	2.27
Oliver, Henry	11	5	45.45	24.5	9	81.82	11	45.45	222.73	26.35	19.27	4.35

Not much more work is required with those three at this stage. I suspect the market will cotton on to their records at some point but for now they worth keeping onside.

### Change of Yard

Some trainers do very well with horses from other stables, that have already run under rules previously.

There is one trainer we should definitely keep onside in this arena and that is Dan Skelton...

23 bets / 7 wins / 11 places / 30% sr / +25 SP / +32 BFSP / AE 2.03

In time the market will be increasingly wary of these types and their opening prices may not be much to shout home about. But, for now, any horse that is running first time up for team Skelton, in a handicap hurdle, having been trained elsewhere, is certainly worth keeping onside.

## Last Time Out Winners

Sometimes I run these ideas through my HorseRaceBase system building software and the trainers that jump off the page really do surprise me. I didn't expect to see this name at the top of the pile when it comes to profit... (and four others of interest also)

Trainer	Bets	Wins	Win%	P/L(SP)	Places	Place%	Races	Race%	ROI(SP)	P/L(BF)	P/L(Plc)	A/E
Nicholls, P F	69	18	26.09	71.81	32	46.38	67	26.87	104.07	91.75	15.84	1.31
Williams, Evan	38	10	26.32	59.05	21	55.26	37	27.03	155.39	114.68	41.63	1.62
King, A	34	7	20.59	25.6	12	35.29	34	20.59	75.29	30.54	-1.34	1.16
Gardner, Mrs S	14	5	35.71	20	10	71.43	14	35.71	142.86	23.52	12.48	1.92
Lavelle, Miss E C	12	5	41.67	15.75	6	50	12	41.67	131.25	16.97	1.91	2.11

## Paul Nicholls

- Carrying 11-8 or more (exc claims): 11/28, 16 places... 39% sr...+46 SP...+56 BFSP...AE 1.88
- Using a claiming jockey: 11/26, 13 places...42% sr...+58 SP...+72 BFSP...AE 2.14
- Up to 2m6f only: 17/54, 27 places...31% sr...+85 SP...+105 BFSP...AE 1.51 (1/15,5 places over further than this)

Judging by the overall figures it could be that the market has cottoned onto these types now. The 2016 figures: 5/13,8 places... +1 SP. He was only 2/22 in 2013 and has had quite a few bigger priced ones go in. So, some caution, but the headline figures are interesting.

In fact, those going off 11/1 or bigger: 5/18,9 places...28% sr...+65 SP...+79 BFSP...AE 4.39

## Evan Williams

Evan's stats do include one 40/1 winner but the figures for the more fancied ones are solid enough. Those going off 14/1 or shorter still: 9/32,16 places...28% sr...+24 SP...+30 BFSP...AE 1.52

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## One Runner at the Track

Not too much to attack on this front but this trainer/track combo, when only having the one runner at the track, could be of some interest moving forward...

- A J Honeyball/Taunton: 7 bets / 5 wins / 5 places / 71% sr / +31 SP / +37 BFSP / AE 4.72

### Horse Wins in Hurdle Races: 0

The following six trainers appear to do well with those that have yet to win a hurdle race of any sort, running in a handicap hurdle here. These stats will include handicap hurdle debutants. The place stats are impressive also and if nothing else these are a good starting point for flagging up horses that may improve past previous non-winning form sooner rather than later.

Trainer	Bets	Wins	Win%	P/L(SP)	Places	Place%	Races	Race%	ROI(SP)	P/L(BF)	P/L(Plc)	A/E
Honeyball, A J	44	16	36.36	75.14	26	59.09	42	38.1	170.77	78.28	36.27	2.12
Daly, H D	37	10	27.03	44.25	19	51.35	37	27.03	119.59	56.88	17.38	1.77
Williams, Ian	37	9	24.32	12.88	15	40.54	37	24.32	34.81	17.39	3.28	1.82
Oliver, Henry	27	8	29.63	27	14	51.85	27	29.63	100	31.28	12.53	2.41
Bailey, Mrs Caroline	24	7	29.17	36.43	15	62.5	24	29.17	151.79	48.58	28.93	1.65
Dagleish, Keith	24	7	29.17	13.13	10	41.67	24	29.17	54.71	15.46	8.3	2.01

### Anthony Honeyball

You could further improve his figures by simply looking at those horses with 0 wins in Handicap Hurdles. This angle builds on those figures above but adds a couple more winners and some more profit.

	Bets	Wins	Win%	P/L(SP)	Places	Place%	Races	Race%	ROI(SP)	P/L(BF)	P/L(Plc)	A/E
ALL	54	18	33.33	95.14	28	51.85	52	34.62	176.19	104.72	36.1	2.08
2016	11	3	27.27	9	7	63.64	11	27.27	81.82	10.81	7.19	1.59
2015	16	7	43.75	38.01	9	56.25	16	43.75	237.56	46.86	16.91	2.48
2014	20	6	30	37.13	9	45	18	33.33	185.65	34.18	10.13	1.84
2013	7	2	28.57	11	3	42.86	7	28.57	157.14	12.87	1.87	2.99

## Top Weights

We are nearly across the finish line now but I just wanted to look to see what trainers did well with their handicap hurdlers that were CLEAR top weight, before any jockey claims etc. This could be some indication of a horses being placed with a big weight to out-class rivals, rather than say carrying a lower weight in a higher class race.

Four trainers caught my eye...

Trainer	Bets	Wins	Win%	P/L(SP)	Places	Place%	Races	Race%	ROI(SP)	P/L(BF)	P/L(Plc)	A/E
Nicholls, P F	32	11	34.38	19.88	18	56.25	32	34.38	62.13	25.83	13.6	1.81
Honeyball, A J	17	7	41.18	40.98	9	52.94	17	41.18	241.06	50.66	10.39	1.76
Williams, Evan	26	6	23.08	54	8	30.77	26	23.08	207.69	105.37	2.71	1.63
Hales, A M	14	5	35.71	16.41	9	64.29	14	35.71	117.21	21.55	2.49	1.68

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That will be all for this month's article. Hopefully you find the mix of micro angles and other stats useful in your punting during the coming months. I think there are a few angles to get stuck into there and with any luck they will help add to your profits this winter.

All the best

Josh