

Cheltenham Hunter Chase Preview/Tips from Darran Pearce...

As in previous years I haven't put points next to the selections and have just put the selection with any alternative's if I want to back more than one.

*I know they are the shortest two horses on the evening but **Barel Of Laughs** looks pretty much impossible to oppose and has to be the Nap. **Popaway** gets the NB as she will be very hard to beat on her pointing form this season which suggests to me she is better than ever before. Having said that **Broken Eagle and High Hatton** e/w are also strong picks.*

5.10

Delta Borget - Run in this race 4 times finishing a close 2nd two years ago, 4th in 2014 and then unseating last year and in 2012. This season he has bumped into Monsieur Gibraltar twice, Darwins Fox at Leicester two starts ago and then was a well beaten 3rd at Exeter last time in a race he couldn't go the pace to get involved with the front two. If he gets round he will no doubt run his race again, but this is a decent renewal of this and hard to see him being good enough to win.

Sam Cavallaro - Going for a hat-trick in this having beaten Delta Borget two years ago and Broken Eagle last year. Comes into the race this year in fair form. He was well behind Persian Snow at Ludlow twice and then fell at Aintree before finishing 3rd to Crackers in a point last month. Clearly his season has been about this race as he has come on with each run and he looks sure to make a bold bid to land the hat-trick.

Are They Your Own - Was having his first run since finishing 9th over hurdles at the Open Meeting in 2015 when falling at the last at Fakenham last month. He was set to win pretty easily that day and he just crumpled at the last. This drop in trip if anything is in his favour and although this race is stronger he has to have a leading chance if able to back up that performance.

Back In June - Won 3 races pointing at this time last year, but not shown a great deal in two runs this time around and even last year's wins leave him with plenty to find.

Broken Eagle - I think with a better ride he would have won this race last year and his impressive winning sequence in points has continued this season winning a couple of races easily as well as a walkover and then a match race at Kimble over Easter. I fancied him to run a big race at Aintree, but he was the main sufferer in the standing start and he was always playing catch up after that. He then came down at Becher's. He has had little in his favour in his 4 hunter chase starts with him not handling soft ground at Fontwell and he didn't stay the trip in the John Corbet Cup at Stratford a year ago. He is much better than able to show under Rules so far and he has a massive chance.

Dr Anubis - Pulled up in a point five on Easter Monday and has no chance.

Mr Sawyer - Was 2nd at Stratford last May which was a fair effort even though he was beaten 13L. Pulled up in his only hunter chase run at Ludlow this season and beaten in 3 points including when a 15L in a 3 runner race last time.

Nothing Personal - Won a Restricted at Aldington last time, but this race a massive step up and he is going to struggle.

Red Inca - Last run under Rules was in a 10f race at Newcastle in June 2015. Not surprisingly has not stayed 3m in 3 point starts this season and he did win a couple of times over hurdles at this trip so this test will suit him much better. He is only 9 and this might well have been the aim, but not sure he will be good enough.

Treacyswestcounty - A reasonable pointer, but was beaten 20L in a bad hunter chase at Huntingdon a year ago and hard to see him winning this.

Western Dream - Finishing a race has often been out of his reach and that has been in maiden points so has an impossible task here.

Willem - Only win has come in France and ran some reasonable races for David Pipe without winning. Didn't always find a great deal for pressure and has pulled up in 3 of his 4 points, finishing a 15L 3rd in the other. This trip is much more suitable, but hard to know what sort of form he is in and even at his best I think he has a bit to find despite what the BHA ratings say.

Summary - I suppose if Red Inca or Willem won it wouldn't be a huge surprise because they are reasonable horses on old form and haven't been staying in points. Delta Borget will no doubt run his usual solid race as long as he gets round and I am sure Sam Cavallaro will make a decent fist of trying to land the hat-trick, but I think Broken Eagle can gain his revenge this year. Joe kicked for home plenty early enough a year ago and he had nothing left when the winner came to challenge. A more sensible ride this time around should see him go one better. The main danger for me is Are They Your Own who would have been a very impressive winner at Fakenham and if he backs that effort up he will go close and he is worth a saver.

Tip: Broken Eagle

Alternative: Are They Your Own

**

6.10

Alskamatic - Finished a neck 2nd in the Intermediate Final 3 years ago and was just passed by Major Malarkey in the final few yards of the 4 miler the year after. He certainly deserves a change of luck and although we haven't seen him since finishing a creditable 16L 10th in last years Foxhunter he has a leading chance in this.

Always Archie - I am a little surprised he is running in this although maybe Tim Vaughan sees him as the one to finally give him a Cheltenham winner. He had shown enough in points to suggest he could win at Stratford last time especially as today's jockey was taking over from the novice riders who had ridden him in those three points. He duly bolted up and although it wasn't a strong race he couldn't have done it any easier and this isn't the strongest race ever either. The problem is he looked tired at the last at Stratford and there is nothing in his form to suggest he wants this sort of trip. If he does stay he has a big chance.

Current Exchange - His jockey had hoped to ride him in the Foxhunter, but the horse didn't get in and she gets her chance her instead. He has been a decent horse in the past and has been doing well enough in points for his inexperienced rider, but she isn't great and it is hard to see her doing well enough to get him in a position to win this.

High Hatton - Was 2nd in this race last year and if anything this looks a weaker renewal. His 3rd at Musselburgh to Wonderful Charm was a really good effort as he tried to go with the winner and then paid for it late on, but I do think he was the 2nd best horse in the race. He was a big disappointment at Taunton last month when he really struggled in a race he was more than capable of winning, but he hated the first time tongue-tie that day and he is better than that. He was beaten in a 3 runner point at Lydstep last time, but the winner looks progressive and he needs more of a stamina test which he will get here. He has a big chance.

Knockaderry Flyer - Only won his maiden two starts ago and was then beaten in his Hunt Members at Paxford on Easter Monday. Going to find this tough.

Kristian Gray - Got very lucky when winning at Leicester in February and the horse who he beat won a handicap off 78 last month which tells you plenty about the form. Wasn't a bad run behind The Flying Doc last time, but this is tougher.

Lauberhorn - On first glance you probably wouldn't give him much of a chance, but I think he wants a stiffer test of stamina than he has had in plenty of his runs this season. I saw him finish 4th at Horseheath in February and he never got close enough to challenge. He was over 20L behind Current Exchange the start after, but again it wasn't a stiff enough test. He then won his only race so far this season when getting a test of stamina at Whitfield. Then again the last twice everything happened too quickly for him. I'm not sure he will be good enough to win, but I can see a better run than his ods suggest.

Master Sunrise - Pulled up in the John Corbet last season and struggled this season. His two 2nds the last twice have both come over 2m4f.

Oliver James - Form is pretty ordinary and was unimpressive when winning his weak Hunt Members at Lockinge on Easter Monday.

Rye Cross - Was 5th in a hot hunter chase at Stratford in March 2015 although beaten 34L. He then missed last season and won one of his 4 starts this term. That win was a decent effort, but he hasn't been so good since and I'm not sure he wants to go this far either.

U Me And Them - Will be amazed if he finishes let alone win.

Well Mett - Won 2 of his last 3 and an outpaced 2nd over 2m5f the other start, but they weren't strong races that he won and his 3rd in a Worcester hunter chase a year ago leaves him with a bit to find.

Summary - This isn't a strong race and the best bet looks to be High Hatton each-way. He ran really well to finish 2nd last year and you can put a line through his last two runs. He is hard to see out of the frame. If Alskamatic is fit then he has a huge chance and I certainly want him onside. I'm doubtful about Always Archie staying and am happy to pass him over given he is favourite. Lauberhorn is the one of the others who can outrun his odds.

Tip - High Hatton ew

Alternative - Alskamatic

6.45

Barel Of Laughs - Was 2nd to Pearlysteps in the old version of this race last year, but has taken his form to a new level this season. He had a pipe opener at Larkhill in December when 17L behind Real Milan and then took the first hunter chase of the season at Taunton (Real Milan unseated). It was a superb run in the Foxhunter to finish 3rd just 1/2L behind Pacha Du Polder and he followed that up by winning the Lady Dudley Cup at Chaddesly Corbett last month in cosy style. That was a good prep for this and the one they have to beat.

Beggar's Velvet - Didn't run too badly for her rider/trainer at Ludlow last time on what was Amy's first ride under Rules. Problem is it showed it was her first ride and the best she can hope for here is to stay out of trouble and get round safely.

Iron Chancellor- Ran pretty well at Warwick a couple of weeks ago, but at the same time it backs up the fact he is an unlikely winner here.

Real Milan - Obviously on the Larkhill beating of Barel Of Laughs he has a massive chance, but I think it is fair to say Barel Of Laughs has improved massively since. At Taunton his young rider didn't seem to know what he was doing and in the end fell off. Following that he was a point by 30L before finishing 2nd back at Larkhill. He was then a 7L 2nd to Pearlysteps at Ludlow in March in what was a decent enough run. I worry about his jockey in this bigger field though and the other important think to note is jockey's can't claim so he is 4lbs worse off with Barel Of Laughs because of that.

Vincitore - Won on his seasonal debut at Barbury and hasn't run too badly in some decent hunter chases including the Aintree Foxhunters last time. An unlikely winner, but might be the type to run into the frame at huge odds.

Arkose - Won a weak Mens Open on his seasonal debut, but 55L 4th to Paint The Clouds at Doncaster and other defeats in points suggest he is going to struggle here.

Curraigflemens - Won a weak hunter chase on Fontwell's hunter chase night a year ago and didn't run too badly at Stratford after that. Not been so good this season though and although he won at Dingley last time I saw the horse he beat get stuffed at Northaw on Monday so the form is weak.

Talkonthestreet - Won a Mixed Open at Charm Park on Easter Monday which was only his 3rd start since June 2014 when he was 4th in Summer Cup at Uttoxeter. Obviously has some fair form in the past, but the race he won last time ended up being pretty weak with the odds on favourite falling.

The Wealerdealer - On old favourite of mine because he has ability, but boy does he have his quirks as he showed at Exeter in October. Only had the one point start this season which came on Easter Saturday when he won a Mixed Open by 5L to qualify for this. The form isn't strong and his form is nowhere near Barel Of Laughs, but he could easily hit the frame.

Murrayana - He was 4th in the Grade 3 Handicap Hurdle at the Grand National meeting last year and at only 7 you would have thought if anything there was more to come. He won on his pointing debut for new connections at Charing, but it was a really poor race. He then pulled up when favourite at Wincanton at the start of March and has been off since. He is hard to fancy on what he has shown this season.

Ni Sin E Mo Ainm - Done really well for her owner/trainer/rider since going pointing and has won twice in points this season. Made his hunter chase debut at Newton Abbot on Easter Saturday and I thought he was a bit disappointing to only come a 15L 3rd. I also thought his jockey struggled a bit and her lack of experience and being able to take use of her 7lbs claim is against his chances. I would give him place claims at best.

The Rodeo Clown - Stuffed at Stratford a couple of weeks ago and has no chance.

Summary - It is great to see so much prize money on offer for the final of this series which is aimed at giving horses who have been pointing a bit prize to aim at and it is worth the same as the Stratford Foxhunters. It is also good to see a double figure field, but you have to say the quality on offer for such a prize isn't quite there. There is obviously one main exception to that and that is Barel Of Laughs. The Foxhunter 3rd should be more than capable of picking up the big prize and he is the one they have to beat, especially as the lack of jockey claims is in Alex's favour. Real Milan is the obvious danger although the jockey is a concern as it is for Ni Sin E Mo Ainm. The Wealerdealer is another with place claims.

Tip - Barel Of Laughs

7.20

Miss Biscotti - A shock winner on her only start of the season when beating Carlton Ryan at Kelso. That run along with the Cartmel run from last year would give her a chance in this, but I just can't help thinking she was flattered in both.

Popaway - Been a superb mare for connections over the years and was winning at this meeting for the 2nd time when landing this last year. It did turn into a bit of a sprint last year which certainly suited, but it might well be the same this time around. In points this season she has looked arguably in the form of her life winning 4 times by 19L, 20L, 25L (Dabinett Moon was 2nd and she clocked a really fast time) and 55L. Things haven't gone so well in hunter chases as she has unseated both times at Taunton and Fakenham. It is hard to know why that has happened because she has never fallen or unseated under Rules before. If she gets round then in the form she has shown in points this season she will be very hard to beat.

Dabinett Moon - Won the first Restricted Final at Stratford 2 years and then went into novice and handicap chases, but things didn't work out for her. It was a shame she was unable to run in a hunter chase last season as she was pretty much unbeatable in points and was very impressive. The problem is this season she looks a completely different horse and not in a good way. She was beaten in her first 4 races including at Brafield to Popaway as mentioned above. She did win a month ago at Cocklebarrow, but it was a match and was hardly proof she was back in form. If she did refind her form from last season she would have a leading chance, but I can't be backing her based on what she has done this season.

Distracted - She won a handicap at Wincanton in November 2015 off 108, but hasn't shown great form in 4 runs since including when pulling up on her hunter chase debut at Chepstow last time. Even on that Wincanton run she would struggle to win this.

Frelia - Was a non-runner at Chepstow on Friday night because of the ground so this was very much the reserve option. She won 5 of her first 7 points and looked a very promising horse, but she has not been so good the last twice. She was a 20L 2nd to Sybarite at Garnons and then was 3rd to War Path last time and that one didn't perform that well at Chepstow on Friday. She has a few questions to answer at the moment.

Martha's Benefit - Won a Restricted by 15L last month, but needs a hell of a lot more to win this.

The Flying Doc- Was 2nd in this last year and wasn't suited by the sprint in turned into although I also think it wasn't Will's greatest ride ever. This season she has won a couple of times in 4 starts including last time, but the form doesn't match what Popaway has achieved between the flags this season and I don't think she can reverse the form from last year.

Summary - Obviously it is a concern that Popaway has unseated in both starts in hunter chases this season, but in points she has looked in the form of her life and if she completes safely I think she will be very hard to beat. Dabinett Moon has claims on last seasons form, but its hard to fancy her on what she has done this season. Miss Biscotti may have been a bit flattered by her last two runs, but in this race it is still useful form and no doubt The Flying Doc will run well again.

Tip - Popaway

8.25

Big Fella Thanks - Just won this race last year and put in a superb effort to finish 3rd at Aintree last month. He has an obvious chance again, but he is very short given he is 15 now and there is every chance the Aintree run might have left his mark. Will be a popular winner, but happy to let him win at short odds.

Full Trottle - Won both his hunter chases now and his form this season is good having won 4 out of 5 and he finished a really good 2nd to Porlock Bay on the other start. Beat Creevytenant at Ludlow a month ago which is a good effort and he looks a progressive horse.

Klepht - Won a hunter chase at Musselburgh last February and ended his season with a good 2nd to Decade Player at Wetherby. He pulled up on his seasonal return, but he bolted up by 20L at Tranwell last month which is even more creditable because he was pointing the wrong way at the start and lost 10L. He clocked a fast time as well although it wasn't a strong race. I'm not a fan of his jockey, but he has place claims.

Mr Moss - Stuffed every run this season and going to struggle here.

Poole Master - Strictly speaking has just over 10L to find with Big Fella Thanks on the Aintree run, but I thought he ran with great credit there given he was up there for a long way until fading out of it late on. His other hunter chase runs have been good. He was impressive at Warwick when beating Mon Parrain, nothing went his way at Bangor and first up he ran a stormer until his stamina gave out.

Six A Side - I'm usually pretty good with remembering hunter chase winners, but I had forgotten he had won one at Kelso a year ago. Having reminded myself about the race he was an easy winner although it was a pretty weak race. This season he has liked finishing 2nd twice as odds on favourite and the other time to The Highlander which was a decent enough run. Last time out he unseated. This is the trip he won at Kelso, but I would be surprised if he was good enough to win.

Catch Tammy - Been well beaten both starts this season and shouldn't be good enough.

Dream Choep - Pulled up on Monday and has no chance.

Driftwood Pride - Two 3rds in hunter chases last month but he was well beaten in both and they were both much weaker than this.

Good Egg - 14 now and this trip should be too sharp for him.

Le Bacardy - Been a much improved horse pointing since going over this sort of trip and has won well the last twice. Had Repeat Business in behind him last time, but that one wouldn't have enjoyed the trip so I wouldn't read too much into that. His jockey isn't very experienced and although this race doesn't have much depth, I would be surprised if he was good enough.

Martin Cash - Well beaten 4th at Southwell 2 weeks ago and no chance here.

Otto The Great - Won a very bad race at Lockinge on Easter Monday and the rest of his form suggests he will struggle.

Sivola De Sivola - Another whose form is nowhere near good enough.

Summary - This is a very weak renewal of this race and there are hardly any you can fancy. To me the front three in the betting have a class edge on the others and I think Poole Master can reverse Aintree form with Big Fella Thanks. He looked very good at Warwick and I think he is the best horse in the race. It was a good run from Big Fella Thanks at Aintree, but the rest of his form this season isn't good enough to win this at 15. Given Full Trotter is the only other one I think can win I will be having a saver on him.

Tip - Poole Master

Alternative - Full Trotter

5.40

Pride Of Parish - I guess if you are being kind he was outpaced at Fakenham by the Are They Your Own and this further trip should suit better, but to me he was certainly 2nd best that day and his pointing form is nothing overly special at all. He also gets a penalty for that win and he looks a very short price to me.

Alfstar - Pulled up last time, but burst a blood vessel that day so that explains that although it always concerns me when horses bleed. Was really impressive when winning his two previous starts by 20L including beating Robin De Boss last time. If he was coming here on the back of those two efforts you would fancy him to run a big race and he wouldn't be a surprise winner, but I find it hard to back horses who have bled.

Carry On Asian - No idea why he is so short in the betting. His win at Penshurst isn't terrible form, but he was stuffed the time before when 2nd and has failed to finish on his other 4 starts including when unseating on the run in at Barbury.

Chosen Lucky - Won 6 out 6 since coming over to this country which is no mean feat as all the races have had double figure fields bar his win last time. No massive winning margins, but he has been winning fairly comfortably. Certainly a danger to all.

Colorado Doc - I know connections think a lot of this horse and he was about to beat Sir Du Bearn at Pyle last time until he unseated at the last. In my view that would have been the best performance any of these has made in points and he won easily the two times before. He also fell first time up this season, but I was there that day and he didn't get a lot of room at the particular fence he fell at and I think that put him off. The slight concern for me is the trip as two of his wins have been over 2m4f and the main plan with him was the Dunraven Bowl at Chepstow last week, but he failed to qualify because he didn't finish at Pyle. Maybe that might be a blessing in disguise if he lands this instead.

Dynamo Frankie - 2-25 in points and yet to win this season sums his chances up.

Excitable Island - Won both races this season, but only 3rd in this last year and this looks a much stronger renewal.

Fly West - Only beat one home in a Tipperary hunter chase two years ago and wasn't seen again until this March. Won all three races this term although had an easy task to qualify for this. Seems to stay well and likely to be handy or leading. On point ratings though he has a bit to find with some of these and although he certainly has claims he looks priced up tight enough.

Game As A Pheasant - Only run in one Intermediate and finished 3rd so unlikely to be going two places better here.

Master Tradesman - Was a shock 33/1 winner on his debut in this country and followed that up with a win in his Restricted. Problem is he hasn't been as good the last twice in Intermediate company and was well beaten by Woodfleet on the first occasion.

Northgeorge - Didn't actually win an Intermediate as he won a Mens Open at Ystradowen last month. 2nd to Universal Solider over Easter was a fair effort as well, but Chosen Lucky has beaten him this season and he certainly is more exposed than most. Still wouldn't surprise me if he ran a decent race.

Packettotherafters - Just behind Northgeorge at Maisemore in March and also behind Pride Of Parish at Cottenham the month before. Only a 3 runner Restricted he won last month and has a bit to find.

Robin De Boss - A close 6th in the Aintree point-to-point bumper last season and won by 15L at Garthorpe in February. Finished 2nd the other 3 times though including when 20L behind Alfstar last time.

Sava Bridge - 2-24 in points and been well beaten all 4 starts this season.

Shantou Prince - An interesting contender mainly because there are a couple of ways you can look at his Wetherby effort behind Ardea. On the face of it running him to under 2L was a fine effort, but given the way Ardea also idled when he won at Hexham I just wonder if it was a case of him being flattered by the fact Ardea wasn't doing an awful lot in front. Having

said that he did have a useful horse in behind him so I wouldn't want to be over harsh on him. He probably would have won at Hornby Castle, but there was all sorts of carnage with coming round the home turn with one horse missing a marker, one horse unseating and then that lose horse carried Shantou Prince out. Having seen the video to my eye he looked to be going better than the two who departed. What is interesting is that connections could have gone to Hexham for the Heart Of All England on Saturday, but have chosen this instead.

Woodfleet - Did beat Pride Of Parish last March although that was over 2m5f. His Restricted win came in a match last season and he was beaten at Parham first up this season. Had Master Tradesman in behind when winning last time, but has a bit too find for me.

En Passe - She did beat a hunter chase winner in her one win this season, but given that was Kristian Gray I wouldn't be reading too much into that and looks to have a fair bit to find.

Summary - Apart from when Fergal O'Brian won the race in 2010 and 2011 the biggest SP of a winner has been 4/1 in the last 10 years, which is staggering given the amount of runners there usually is in it. What it means though is class comes to the fore and for me the best horse on paper is Colorado Doc. I am slightly concerned about the trip and how he will take to the fences, but as I mention above connections really like the horse. I am also going to back Chosen Lucky who looks very progressive and to win 6 on the bounce is some feat. Shantou Prince would be the main danger to those two.

Tip - Colorado Doc

Alternative - Chosen Lucky

7.50

Ballytober - Shapes as if he could be suited by a trip like this and not run too badly all 4 starts this season even if he was lucky to finish 2nd at Newbury. Suspect he won't quite be good enough though.

Dolatulo - Didn't seem to stay in the Grand National or Scottish Grand National, but to be fair this race not at that level and he was a staying on 3rd in the Becher Chase in 2015. The jockey proved he isn't great at Kelso and the Warwick race came too soon for him. Wisely decided to make all at Ffos Las and he bolted up in the mud there before being outclassed in the Foxhunter. He certainly has leading claims here because he has shown enough to me that he holds enough class to run well, but his jockey is a big concern for me. This is a big field round Cheltenham and given he was always well behind at the Festival it was hardly like he had to try and ride a race. I would be surprised if they made the running so he will have to try and ride a race and I doubt he is up to it. So basically capable of winning, but the jockey will hinder his chances.

Join Together - Ran well to finish 2nd in this last year, but firmly on the downgrade this season and was well behind Pantxoax at Newton Abbot.

Pantxo - Was impressive at Newton Abbot on his debut for the yard and that came over 3m2f so I don't think the trip will be an issue. He has a fair bit of back class as well and his superb trainer has clearly got him back to form. What I am surprised about is the jockey booking. She has only had 4 rides under Rules so far and again that has to be a concern in a race like this. The other big concern is that he jumped out to his right pretty badly last time and if he does that again it will take a huge effort to win this and his inexperienced jockey could struggle if he does as well.

Pentiffic - Given Michelle Payne is coming over to ride next month its a shame she wouldn't be able to ride a horse she rode twice in 2007 when he was trained in Australia. He went very close to winning this in 2014 when 3rd, but although he has finished 5th and 4th the last two years he was well beaten on both occasions. Been running well again this season, but hard to see why he should win this at 13 given he hasn't won it yet.

Connies Cross - Really good 3rd in this a couple of years ago, but it has been pretty much downhill all the way since and easy to pass over for me.

De Boitron - Been 4th in the Grand Annual in the past so had plenty of ability, but hard to think even at 13 he wants a 4m trip. Been doing well enough in points this season including winning a Ladies Open in February. On paper his 3rd to Ask The Weatherman over 3m4f over Easter looks good but the winner definitely was below par and I wouldn't read too much into it. The jockey change is interesting, but just seems an unlikely winner to me.

Goodnight Vienna - Won a couple of weak points the last twice but shouldn't be anywhere near good enough for this.

Grove Pride - Lost his way under Rules, but has run 3 decent races in points so far although hard to see him being good enough for this.

Jepeck - I was a little disappointed he didn't do better at Towcester on his hunter chase debut although a mistake didn't help that day. He is a horse who has plenty of stamina and this 4m trip could be the making of him and one of the leading contenders on form.

Legal Legend - As I type this using the Racing Post site I find it hard to believe the Spotlight writer things he ran well at this meeting last year given he was a 43L 4th. That isn't exactly what I call a good effort. Run some good efforts in defeat in 4 point starts this season, but that suggests he won't be good enough and doesn't scream out to be needing this trip.

Lets Get Serious - Caused a massive shock at Fontwell in 2015 when winning their long distance race on hunter chase night, but this would be an even bigger shock were he to win.

One Conemara - I fancied him in this race last year, but he never got involved and was a well beaten 5th. Won the same race over 4m1f at Shreiff Hutton as he did before this race last year so his stamina certainly isn't a worry, but that 5th last year does suggest he isn't quite up to this level and the hope is that a year older might mean he can do better.

Rally - Struggled in points this season and hard to fancy.

Sybarite - I have said all the way during this season that the only race I would consider backing Sybarite in was this one. If ever there was a horse who could make a fool out of you it is this one and he might make me look silly tipping him up here, but he is 20/1 at the time of writing and his quirks are very much factored into the price. He flew home to nearly win at Chaddesley over Christmas and he did the same at Leicester in February. He then managed to win by 20L at Garnons in a stunning performance. He wasn't so good last month at Mollington though when only 4th to Beggar's Velvet in what was his worse effort of the season. We saw a couple of years ago that the quirky Major Malarkey managed to win from a long way back and I can really see him flying past beaten horses and that might well see him get his head in front. Alex Edwards takes over and he he is unbeaten in 5 rides on him.

There's No Panic - Seems to have been priced up on his old Rules form and the fact Will Biddick rides rather than his pointing form. Stamina isn't a concern on his old Rules form and he has some fairly useful placed form pointing this season after 2 years off. The problem is in the context of this it isn't the strongest and stamina has been to the fore as well so that can't be used. There are quite a few I would put in front of him.

Tin Pot Man - Did win a point in February, but struggled otherwise and stuffed in this last year.

Total Rebellion - No chance.

Summary - Dolatulo and Pantxoia could both win this, but the jockey's inexperience on both horses are enough for me to want to take them on, as is the jumping out to the right of the later. Jepeck looks like 4m will suit him down to the ground and he probably has the classiest point form here so of the single figure horses he is the one to back. I have talked myself into backing One Conemara again even though he was a well beaten 5th last year. He got himself a long way back in a race where those up with the pace did best and he has been front running this season so given we know he stays if he is up there he might do better and at the price I am happy to have a small bet on him. The main bet though is Sybarite. I thought he would be in single figures for this but 20/1 more than factors in the fact he might completely chuck the towel in. 4m ought to suit and I really can see him flying up the hill to be involved at the finish.

Tip - Sybarite ew

Alternative - Jepeck and One Conemara ew