

## The week that was: 29<sup>th</sup> Jan- 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018

### Handicappers to follow?

#### Chasers

*Modeligo* (2.2.18 Chep) He didn't fire here on ground he may have hated. He had run well on heavy before, but he never really looked comfortable. In Handicap Chases/Feb-May/2m-2m4f he is: 2,1,1,1,3,PU He should be worth keeping onside in the weeks ahead as I suspect he will bounce into form at some point. He is handicapped to win again.

*Ballydine* (3.2.18 Sand) Sadly for me this one outstayed/outclassed one of my tips. It's rare for me to highlight a LTO winner but I have a hunch that he could be smart. Longsdon has only pitched 15 horses into G1/G2 hurdles in the last 3 years or so which could be some indication as to the regard which this one is held. Ballydine was having only his third chase start here and relished the step up to 3m. That wasn't a surprise, but I thought his lack of chase experience may catch him out here, at the prices. Clearly it didn't. He jumped well, travelled strongly and looks a robust chaser. There could be plenty more to come from him over fences and he could be a Sandown regular in the years ahead. Loose Chips/Pete The Feat Mark 2! It will be interesting to see how far he can progress. *Sametegal* also ran in this race... I am yet to be convinced he stays 3m in Soft, if at all. Maybe he'll be seen to better effect at shorter and on better ground... not sure if there are some big spring Festivals around the corner...

#### Hurdlers

*Peruvien Bleu* (4.2.18 Taunton) I thought this one travelled strongly through this race and looked like playing a hand in the finish. In the end his effort flattened out three from home. He was returning after 92 days here and all his winning form is on a sound surface. I suspect he will pop up again when the ground dries out, maybe at Ludlow where he is 2/2.

*Billy Dutton* (4.2.18 Taunton) A chance I have lost even more marbles with this one, but I thought he ran an ok race here. He is now 12, although only 26 runs to his name and 19 over hurdles. He has clearly had his problems. His mark is starting to fall, and I suspect they may find a weak race for him this year somewhere. He had every chance two from home here before weakening. It could be he has regressed fully but the trainer (Chris Down) hasn't had a winner since the 2<sup>nd</sup> October and it could be they are under a cloud. When they return to winning form, so could he. He is 3/6 at Exeter over timber, so keep that in mind. He likes to race on the pace also. Maybe they will put blinkers on him one day and make all. A weak spring handicap awaits, ideally with no unexposed horses lining up.

*Champagne Chaser* (2.2.18 Chep) I thought this one may out-run his odds and place here. He doubled in price to 25/1 and ran a respectable 4<sup>th</sup>, where all 'good' EW bets finish! He was only beaten 6l and I thought it was a run of promise. He was back over hurdles having ran poorly on his two chase starts. With his best form coming on good to soft/soft there is a chance he floundered in this heavy ground. I think there could still be some leverage in his handicap mark over timber and he could build on this run NTO. He was running on through the line.

Elsewhere... the Betfred Heroes Handicap Hurdle (G3) run at Sandown on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb may be worth keeping an eye on. They crawled through this race with many horses pulling their chance away and some getting tapped for toe before running on. *Dashing Perk* (unexposed) pulled hard for most of the race before fading, *Does Your Dog Bite* was keen and doing his best work late on. *Golan Fortune* ran an incredible race given he was held up last off a slow pace (not finished with winning on this evidence) and the Nicholls horse that beat him could be smart. (superb ride from Sam, always in the right spot and stoked him up early on) *Folsom Blue* ran on again also, having hit a flat spot. He is 11 but could still have a stamina sapping handicap in him. I suspect a few of these may be seen to better effect with a stronger pace and/or better ground. A race to track as a few could be underestimated on their next few starts and leave these runs behind. I could be wrong on that front, time will tell!

Ballymalin ran in the Edinburgh National. I think I've mentioned him before but in any case he went much better in this race on decent ground. Bar a tired fall late on he jumped well. I think the better going made a big difference, but he didn't quite see out this trip. He has handicap chase wins in him on decent ground, over 3m or so.

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Do add these to your own trackers if you wish to keep an eye on them. I try to post any of interest in the members' posts but I can be unreliable on that front, especially at weekends. (I do need to improve in that area!) Do use them as starting points.

## Stats The Way To Do It

### The Cheltenham Festival 2018

#### Owners

*Below I have used the 'owners' filter within the HorseRaceBase system building tool to take a look at Gigginstown and JP McManus. I haven't done this before but thought it may be useful. The former has provided me with some of my biggest Festival winners to date. Many of Michael O'Leary's horses appear to be laden with stamina and come alive in March. Like many horses some of them appear to relish the stronger pace you generally get at this meeting (due to big field sizes/more front runners etc), the stiff nature of the track and the better ground. These race conditions can be very different from the small field, heavy ground, novice/graded races they may have been running in and as such they appear to be a different animal all together, often 'thrown in' when it comes to the handicaps.*

For now I will just rattle off the stats. I have yet to decide what I will highlight in the daily posts during Festival week but you are free to note these and use them how you please...

#### Gigginstown House Stud

**All runners 2013-:** 113 bets / 12 wins / 37 places / 11% sr / +51 SP / +104 BFSP / AE 1.01

- Handicap Chases (exc novice hncp): 4/12,6p, +69 BFSP
- 'Non Major' races: 3/13,8p, +30 (inc the 2 hncp hurdle winners)

#### Chases

- 18/1 + SP, 0/7,0p
- Ran in handicap chase LTO: 3/5,4p, +61

#### Handicaps

All handicappers: 40 bets / 6 wins / 10 places / +51 SP / +71 BFSP

- 18/1 + SP : 0/11,0p
- 16/1 or shorter SP: 6/29,10p, +82 BFSP
  - 12/1-16/1 SP: 6/19,6p, +92
- So, 16/1 or shorter SP >>>
  
- 'Non Major' races: 3/10,7p, +42
  - Listed: 0/6,0p
- Handicap Debut in NH Race Type: 3/15,5p, +30
- 0 Handicap Wins in career: 4/20,7p, +45
- 0 runs at Cheltenham: 5/14,7p, +74
- 0 runs on the official 'going' : 4/9,4p, +59
  - (sloshing around in Irish soft/heavy, they hit 'good/good to soft' and improve)
- Class Move
  - Drop 2 classes (ie G3>C2, or G1>G3) 4/6,5p, +67
  - Up 1, Drop 1, Drop 2: 14 bets / 6 wins / 7 p / +97
- Ran In a Novice race LTO: 3/6,5p,
- 'Micro angles'
  - Ran on Soft>Heavy LTO, running on 'Good' today: 5/12,6p, +75
  - Ran in Novice Chase/Novice Hurdle/Handicap Chase LTO: 6/10,8p, +101

## JP McManus

**All runners:** 189 bets / 14 wins / 50 places / 7.4% / -94 SP / -82 BFSP / AE 0.73

### **Odds**

- 10/1 or bigger SP: 1/113,14p
  - Handicaps: 0/76,9p
- 9/1 or shorter SP: 13/76,36p, +12 BFSP. AE 0.98
- 9/1 or shorter SP >>>
- 'Hurdle' + 'Chase' (as defined by HRB, not handicaps, not novice): 8/22,14p, +31
- Dropping in class from LTO: 4/12,6p, +21 (inc Cause of Causes x2)
  - Handicap Chase: 2/7,4p
- 3m2f or further: 6/17,9p, +28 (inc Cause of Causes/On The Fringe multiple winners)
- Trainers
  - Jonjo O'Neill: 2/10,5p, +11
  - Gordon Elliot: 3/7,4p, +14
  - E Bolger: 2/8,4p, +3
- Handicaps: 2/38,3p ! (handicappers 9/1 < sp)
- All Non Handicaps: 11/38,23p, +40
  - *1-3 runs at Cheltenham: **9/19,14p, +47***

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That's all for this week's article,

Happy Punting,  
Josh