



# ROYAL ASCOT

## DAY 1 PREVIEW

TUESDAY 18 JUNE

### RACE 1

QUEEN ANNE  
STAKES (GROUP 1),  
1M

PRIZE MONEY  
£750,000

### RACE 2

COVENTRY STAKES  
(GROUP 2),  
6F

PRIZE MONEY  
£175,000

### RACE 3

KING CHARLES III  
STAKES (GROUP 1),  
5F

PRIZE MONEY  
£650,000

### RACE 4

ST JAMES'S PALACE  
STAKES (GROUP 1),  
7F 213Y

PRIZE MONEY  
£650,000

### RACE 5

ASCOT STAKES  
(HERITAGE  
HANDICAP),  
2M 3F 210Y

PRIZE MONEY  
£110,000

### RACE 6

WOLFERTON  
STAKES (LISTED),  
1M 1F 212Y

PRIZE MONEY  
£120,000

### RACE 7

COPPER HORSE  
HANDICAP,  
1M 6F 34Y

PRIZE MONEY  
£110,000

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## ST JAMES' PALACE STAKES

RUNNER BY  
RUNNER GUIDE

BY SKY SPORTS RACING PUNDIT JOHN HUNT



Quite rightly billed as the race of the week, the Group 1 St James' Palace Stakes, for the first time since 2016, sees the winners of all three 2000 Guineas from England, France and Ireland clash in one sumptuous cocktail of miling brilliance.

## ALMAQAM



**ALMAQAM**'s trainer Ed Walker always seems to find at least one really nice horse every year, and this son of Lope De Vega could be up there ability wise and confirmed his growing reputation with a destructive, all-the-way win in Sandown's Heron Stakes on his most recent start. Admittedly it was a messy race with the soft ground finding one or two out and a few unsure as to where to race, but Almaqam looked completely straightforward and ran on with relish for an easy win. That form alone will need improving on hugely, his official rating of 112 clearly leaves him with plenty to find, but that doesn't take away from the fact that he looks brim full of potential and remains an exciting miler.

## ALYANAABI



**ALYANAABI** is a son of the magnificent Too Darn Hot who was third in this race in 2019 and his second place behind City of Troy in last season's Dewhurst clearly represents top class two-year-old form. However, to strongly fancy him to win here is difficult as Notable Speech was by some way his superior in the 2000 Guineas. There is some hope, though. I didn't feel that Alyanaabi looked one hundred per cent happy on the track at Newmarket where he raced away from the main protagonist and this stiff mile could really be to his liking. On the dam's side of his breeding, he's related to Ghanaati who completed the Guineas/Coronation Stakes double back in 2009, but also the thorough stayer Rumoush who was placed in both the Oaks and Park Hill Stakes as a three-year-old. Alyanaabi has nearly five lengths to find with Notable Speech so it's a mountainous task, but on this stiffer track and with a tweak to his race style (I think Jim Crowley will ride him with more restraint here), it's not impossible to see the gap close between him and Notable Speech.

## DARLINGHURST



**DARLINGHURST** is one of two raiders coming over from France and I think he will prove more of a threat than Metropolitan. He is by Dark Angel (sire of Battaash, Royal Ascot winner in 2020) but with a very uninspiring dam side of his pedigree. However, his form is really eye catching. His best performance in a four race unbeaten year to date, came when landing the Prix Du Guiche at Chantilly over nine furlongs when easily accounting for First Look. The runner up then returned to Chantilly for the Prix Du Jockey and ran a brilliant race when runner up to the Arc de Triomphe bound, Look De Vega. That gives Darlingtonhurst an interesting profile and its fascinating that Jerome Reynier embraces this tough assignment. Reynier is the emerging talent at French racings top table and his rare forays to England are always worth noting. The one concern for Darlingtonhurst is that this will, in all probability be the quickest ground he has encountered to date; all his progressive form has been produced on synthetic tracks or on soft ground.

## HENRY LONGFELLOW



**HENRY LONGFELLOW** - what a fascinating runner, attempting to give Aidan O'Brien a record extending 10th win in the race. Of the previous nine it's interesting to note that only three of them were victorious having been beaten on their previous starts. That race was a nightmare for Ryan Moore as he was not once but twice kyboshed by his rivals. Moore sat off the pace early but shortly after halfway was looking for an out. So, with a line straight through that as a piece of form we are left with the brilliance of his two year old form, pick of which being the National Stakes victory at the Curragh. He slammed Bucanero Fuerte that afternoon, himself a Group 1 winner, and I still believe in this horse. He is another, like Darlingtonhurst who is unproven on fast ground, but I still think he is Notable Speech's biggest threat.

# ST JAMES' PALACE STAKES

## RUNNER BY RUNNER GUIDE

CONTINUED

### METROPOLITAN

METROPOLITAN was a surprise winner of the French 2000 guineas. We have already discussed Henry Longfellow's miserable experience above and in comparison, Metropolitan had a dream run under Alexis Pouchin who gave him a peach. Jumping out of stall number one, Pouchin was determined not to forfeit the advantage of that draw and he managed to stay no worse than third all the way to the cut away about two furlongs out. For me, his subsequent run in the Derby was only fair and generally, with so many horses in a heap behind the first two, I cannot escape the feeling that Metropolitan got lucky that day. None of his previous form suggested that he was up to classic class and even from another nice draw in stall two, I'd be staggered if things fall his way for a second time.

### NOTABLE SPEECH

NOTABLE SPEECH is the highest profile runner in the race after his devastating win in the 2000 Guineas at Newmarket where he beat reopposing Rosallion by a length and half and Alyaanabi nearly five lengths back. He is unbeaten after rattling off three winter Kempton victories but on the book, there wasn't much that signalled him as a Guineas winner, hence his 16/1 SP at Newmarket. William Buick came out with some amazingly complementary quote following the Guineas, mostly in relation to the manner of the movement past City of Troy around the three-furlong marker. He was very impressive and bearing in mind that was his first run on turf, it was impossible to crab him. Charlie Appleby won the Guineas three years ago with Coroebus who scraped in subsequently at Royal Ascot, winning the St James' Palace Stakes with a much lower rating than he achieved at Newmarket. That suggests to me that Notable Speech only needs to replicate his effort at HQ to win again. Its seldom that straightforward but it may well prove to be the case in this instance.

### ROSALLION

ROSALLION finished second to Notable Speech at Newmarket, a brilliant run and he backed that up with a much deserved victory in the Irish 2000 Guineas, where he was set a completely different test. Always quite prominent at Newmarket, he was set a fair task from off the pace at The Curragh and

it took him quite some time to reel in stablemate Haatem but he got there to give Richard Hannon a richly deserved second classic. Hannon has always talked about Rosallion's speed and quality, but I felt we saw something a little different from him as he really had to battle hard. And there's the rub - was it too hard a race so close to this assignment? It appears as though he would struggle to beat Notable Speech if he had come fresh from Newmarket. But to throw in such a gallant, all-out effort at the Curragh means he will have to demonstrate plenty of durability to go alongside his undoubted brilliance. I'll be delighted if I'm wide of the mark with that opinion but, nevertheless, his presence here greatly enhances the race as a spectacle.

### UNQUESTIONABLE

UNQUESTIONABLE - a Breeders Cup winner can go off such a big price tells you all you need to know about the quality of this race. He won the Juvenile Turf on rattling fast ground at Santa Anita so whilst a slick surface will not be an issue for him, the opposition here is likely to be. His best hope revolves around his second placing behind Rosallion in the Jean Luc Lagadere in Paris, but even then, he was soon put in his place even though just a length separated them at the line. Earlier in the year, Unquestionable was twice beaten by Bucanero Fuerte, giving him little or no chance of matching his stablemate, Henry Longfellow. He represents an intriguing alliance between Al Shaqab and Coolmoore but it's highly unlikely that Ascot will have to struggle to make room to fit all connections on to the winners podium in this instance.

### VERDICT

A great race, one to savour and one which, in all probability Notable Speech will win an enhance his reputation. But in terms of betting, I see **DARLINGHURST** as a genuine contender in the hope that he will handle the quicker surface. Jerome Reynier is a superb trainer, and I don't think this bold assault on one of the summers great prizes will miss by very far so he will be my each way bet. Good luck and enjoy.

# EXPERT TIPS

BY SKY SPORTS RACING PUNDIT JAMES FLAHERTY



## 14.30 | QUEEN ANNE STAKES MALJOOM



**MALJOOM**, was in my “Ten to Follow” at the start of last season, but a lot of water has gone under the bridge since then. The jury is out whether he is quite the same horse that was an unlucky loser at this meeting two years ago in the St. James’ Palace Stakes. He spent time on the sidelines after that run due to injury and disappointed on his only run last season. However, connections have been extremely patient with him, and he might just be worth giving another chance to confirm the huge promise of that June 2022 run. His followers would have garnered some hope from his seasonal return here in April, when he had to make his own running and appeared to blow up. I am expecting him to improve from that run and this race looks sure to be run to suit with plenty of pace on. He will love the ground and at the prices, he was the clear pick. However, given his shaky profile, a small play is advised. He could be a boom or bust selection, but hopefully it will be the former, and the price is big enough to tempt me.

## 15.45 | KING CHARLES III STAKES ROGUE LIGHTNING EACH WAY



The sprinting division continues to have an open look to it, but there are a few young pretenders that connections will hope can stamp their authority on it in the King Charles III Stakes. Big Evs, is probably chief among those, although his only previous attempt in a Group 1 ended in disappointment in the Nunthorpe. That appears to have been just a temporary blip though and one can forgive a juvenile taking on his elders. He was an authoritative winner of the Windsor Castle at this meeting last year and proved he has trained on with a ready success in Listed company on his reappearance. At a bigger price though, I am drawn to **ROGUE LIGHTNING**, who I felt was a sprinter to follow this season after his desperately unlucky run in the Abbaye last October, when he shaped much better than his close fifth. He might just have needed his reappearance (he did last year) and the better ground here will suit too. He was progressive last year and should continue to improve this year. I have long thought he is an ideal type for this race with his running style. He is a previous course and distance winner and at a double-figure price with four places available, I can’t let him go unbacked.

## 17.05 | WOLFERTON STAKES THE GRAND VISIR EACH WAY



The card is closed out with two staying handicaps and the Wolferton. The first of the handicaps, the Ascot Stakes, is as open as one would expect, but I don’t think the veteran **THE GRAND VISIR** should be as big as he is given his record here. He may be ten years young, but he isn’t showing signs of decline and is handicapped to run well. His course form is the key factor, with form figures of 123823 at Ascot, and the win coming in this very race off a mark of 100 (13lb higher than he is tomorrow), although it was five years ago. He hasn’t actually won since, but he does have some recent efforts that suggest he is no forlorn hope off this mark, including a pair at last year’s meeting. He was a five-length eighth in this race off a mark of 95, better than the bare result as the first four home all raced close to the pace, and he came from the rear. He was turned out again later in the week and ran even better when a close second to 102-rated Dawn Rising in the Queen Alexandra Stakes, with Run For Oscar back in third. Both of those efforts suggest he is overlooked at 40/1 here, even if he would be vulnerable to a progressive rival.

# HANDICAP HOTSHOT

BY SKY SPORTS RACING PUNDIT TONY ENNIS



# BOHER ROAD



97

**5-Y-O BAY GELDING**  
**TRAINER: JP FAHEY**  
**OWNER: MR PATRICK K MCCARTHY**  
**JOCKEY: R P WHELAN**

**SIRE: VAMOS (FR)**  
**DAM: SHAHZEENA (IRE)**  
**DAM'S SIRE: ROCK OF GIBRALTAR (IRE)**

The Ascot Stakes handicap market is dominated by Irish raiders, with the top four in the market all trained across the Irish Sea. It's the longest priced runner of that quartet that catches my eye in this in the shape of Boher Road. The Vados gelding faced some stiff tasks over hurdles in the winter - including against Ballyburn, and has seemed much happier back on the level this season. His stamina will certainly be put to the test in this, but I loved his attitude when winning a 2m1f handicap from the front at Killarney last time and the second from that race has since won a competitive handicap at Punchestown earlier this month. This will clearly require a step up from his last two performances but he's a horse in-form who knows how to win and at double figure odds he makes each-way appeal.



# HOLLIE DOYLE

Sky Sports Racing ambassador Hollie Doyle runs the rule over her four rides on the opening day of Royal Ascot on Tuesday



## ELECTROLYTE | COVENTRY STAKES | 15:05



**ELECTROLYTE** has been very professional from the minute he arrived at Archie Watson's Lambourn yard from the breeze-ups and can show the racing world what a promising colt he is on the opening day of Royal Ascot. He looks an exciting ride in the Group 2 Coventry Stakes, a race I was lucky enough to win back in 2020 on Archie's subsequent King's Stand hero Bradsell. This Hello Youmzain colt, who was knocked down to Wathnan Racing for £220,000 at Doncaster breeze-ups, has a lovely mind and wasted no time in making a winning debut at Ayr less than two weeks later. It was the same maiden that Archie's Army Ethos won before going on to finish second for me in last season's Coventry and this horse compares favourably. We're drawn high in stall 18 but have the fancied Andesite and Al Qudra around us, so could be well placed.

## KYLIAN | KING CHARLES III STAKES | 15:45



The King Charles III Stakes is another race I won on Bradsell two years ago and this time I link up with Archie Watson's outsider **KYLIAN**. A smart two-year-old, he had his first run for us in the Listed Westow Stakes at York's Dante Festival and ran well after a long lay-off. We weren't expecting to run against a horse of the calibre of Big Evs that day but he showed blistering speed - much more than we expected, to be honest. He's a big horse who has tightened up for the run and we've been pleased with his work at home. He's drawn very high in 16 but we're right in between fancied runners Regional and Asfoora who should give us a nice tow into the race. It's a big ask at the weights but I'm expecting Kylian to out-run his massive odds.

## NATHANAEL GREENE | ASCOT STAKES | 17:05



Alastair Ralph's five-year-old **NATHANAEL GREENE** is among the outsiders in the longest race of the day, the 2m4f Ascot Stakes. It's a big ask as he hasn't run since pulling up over hurdles at Ludlow back in November. Formerly with William Haggas, he ran well in defeat in staying handicaps at Haydock for my husband Tom (Marquand) and Goodwood last summer but whether he has the stamina to see out the Gold Cup trip remains to be seen.

## INTINSO | COPPER HORSE HANDICAP | 18:15



The Copper Horse Handicap is another race I have on my CV. I won it for my boss Imad Alsagar on Amtiyaz in 2021 and am hoping for a repeat in the dark green silks on his half-brother **INTINSO**. Well drawn in stall 2, he sports a tongue-tie for the first time which I think will help him find that little bit extra required to win a competitive race like this. He's got good form on this track, finishing third in last season's Shergar Cup Classic, and will enjoy the longer trip. Well placed in stall two, I'm really hoping he steps up to the occasion as we've always thought he has a big one in him.

# TIMEFORM TIPS

## RACE

# 1

- 1st **CHARYN** (5)
- 2nd **BIG ROCK** (2)
- 3rd **FACTEUR CHEVAL** (8)

## RACE

# 2

- 1st **CATALYSE** (6)
- 2nd **COWARDOFTHECOUNTY** (9)
- 3rd **CAMILLE PISSARRO** (5)

## RACE

# 3

- 1st **BIG EVS** (12)
- 2nd **REGIONAL** (5)
- 3rd **ASFOORA** (8)

## RACE

# 4

- 1st **NOTABLE SPEECH** (6)
- 2nd **ROSALLION** (7)
- 3rd **ALMAQAM** (1)

## RACE

# 5

- 1st **ZANNDABAD** (10)
- 2nd **PIED PIPER** (1)
- 3rd **TRITONIC** (7)

## RACE

# 6

- 1st **TORITO** (16)
- 2nd **BOTANICAL** (5)
- 3rd **ASTRO KING** (4)

## RACE

# 7

- 1st **BELLOCCIO** (8)
- 2nd **A PIECE OF HEAVEN** (7)
- 3rd **FOX JOURNEY** (9)



Charyn winning the Al Shaqab Lockinge Stakes



Big Evs winning the British Stallion Studs EBF Westow Stakes



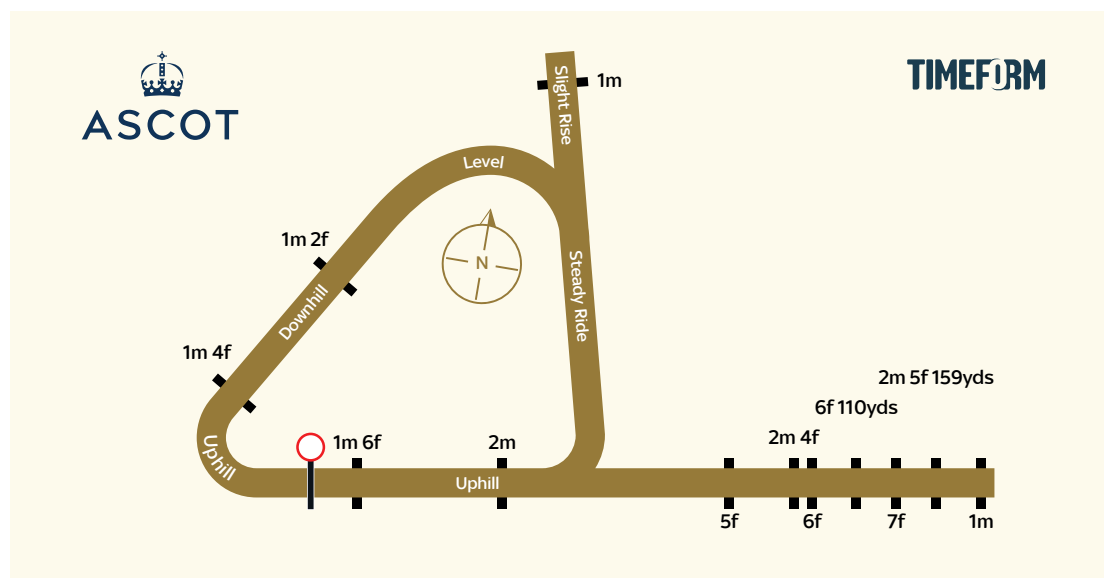
Notable Speech winning the QIPCO 2000 Guineas Stakes



# GUIDE TO ASCOT

By Classic-winning jockey and Sky Sports Racing presenter **Jason Weaver**

“ Because the run-in on Ascot’s round course is relatively short, positioning - jockeyship in other words - is key. It goes without saying that in steadily-run races you want to be towards the sharp end but, whatever the pace, you can get into trouble trying to come through rivals late on. We’re still learning about the straight course, following the relaying a few years back, but in my view it’s more pace-dependent than draw-dependent. Given the right pace to chase, I reckon you can win from anywhere. ”



The round course is a right-handed, triangular circuit of fourteen furlongs, with a run-in of 2- furlongs. There is a straight mile course and the Old mile course which joins the round course in Swinley Bottom. Despite the downhill run into Swinley Bottom and relatively short run-in from the final turn, Ascot is galloping in character. Since the redevelopment, the turn into the straight has become more sweeping and those ridden prominently can be difficult to peg back. Nowadays, the ground in the straight drains quicker than the rest of the course, meaning going descriptions can vary.

