



ROYAL ASCOT

DAY 5 PREVIEW

SATURDAY 22 JUNE

RACE 1

THE CHESHAM
STAKES (LISTED),
7F

PRIZE MONEY
£110,000

RACE 2

THE HARDWICKE
STAKES (GROUP 2),
1M 3F 211Y

PRIZE MONEY
£250,000

RACE 3

THE QUEEN
ELIZABETH II
JUBILEE STAKES
(GROUP 1),
6F

PRIZE MONEY
£1,000,000

RACE 4

THE JERSEY STAKES
(GROUP 3),
7F

PRIZE MONEY
£150,000

RACE 5

THE WOKINGHAM
STAKES (HERITAGE
HANDICAP),
6F

PRIZE MONEY
£175,000

RACE 6

THE GOLDEN
GATES STAKES
(HANDICAP),
1M 1F 212Y

PRIZE MONEY
£110,000

RACE 7

THE QUEEN
ALEXANDRA
STAKES
(CONDITIONS),
2M 5F 143Y

PRIZE MONEY
£110,000

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THE QUEEN ELIZABETH II JUBILEE STAKES

RUNNER BY

RUNNER GUIDE

BY SKY SPORTS RACING PUNDIT TIM CARROLL



ART POWER



Is a speedy type that arrives having finished fourth in the Greenland's Stakes at the Curragh at his most recent outing. He's run well at this meeting in the past having recorded a win over the minimum trip in the 2020 Palace of Holyroodhouse Handicap. It's always thought he was more effective over five-furlongs on a testing layout such as Ascot, but he was a shock winner of the Champions Sprint (six-furlongs) last October when he had several of these in behind, and although that was on soft going, he's effective on quicker ground and is one to keep on the safe side.

JUMBY



Although we had a big price winner of this race last year, it's hard to make a case for the Eve Johnson Houghton 6yo, even with blinkers now fitted. He does have some back form having won the Gaunt Stakes over seven-furlongs at Haydock last year with The Astrologist, who then ran fifth in this at his next start, two-lengths behind. He gets further than this, thus he will enjoy having a solid gallop to aim at, but he would need to improve on recent efforts.

KHADEM



Who was fourth in this in what was a strong renewal back in 2020, caused one of the upsets of the meeting when taking this last year at 80/1 under a masterful near last to first ride from Jamie Spencer. However, the win was full of merit as there was no pace collapse with the next few home having either punched forward or sat mid division. He's often ponied down to the start, and he arrives after a lackluster performance on his seasonal return at York last month, but this is a lesser race than last year's edition, however, Jamie Spencer does abandon ship to ride the stables other runner (Mitbaahy) who is in the same ownership.

KINROSS



Brings a strong profile to the contest having won a Champions Sprint and a Foret, whilst placed in a July Cup & the Breeders' Cup Mile and if running to that sort of level he would take all the beating here. But he does go into the race first up this year and although he won on debut and after short layoffs earlier in his career, he's not a noted first up specialist. He has run well enough in defeat the last two years in this race, but all his peak form over the last couple of campaigns

has come after he has got a couple of runs under his belt and whilst this is a race any owner would want to bag, I just wonder now that he's a 7yo, given the late start to the campaign if connections are maybe thinking further ahead.

MILL STREAM



Won a Group 3 in France last year and has returned in good order this season after a wind op. He followed up a nice return when narrowly beaten in the Abernant at Newmarket behind Washington Heights when turning that form around, just arriving in time to land a four-way photo in the Duke of York Clipper Stakes. However, that run can be marked up as he was forced to switch off heels on a couple of occasions, and without making any predictions, he does win more easily with a clear shot. He did come up short his two spins at the top-level last year, but that was as 3yo against older horses, and he looks a more complete article now.

MITBAAHY



Had always been considered more of a five-furlong type when with Roger Varian and finished midfield in The King Charles III (King Stand) at this meeting last year. However, he's only recently joined the Charlie Hills yard and he ran a career best when storming home over six-furlongs from last in the Greenland Stakes at the Curragh with a few of these in behind when last seen in May. Ascot is a far more testing course than the Curragh, but he was given plenty to do that day in a race where all had their chance, but he ran through the line with plenty of purpose, and Jamie Spencer does jump off last year's winner (same ownership) to take the ride.

QUINAULT



Is a likeable type that has won seven of his fourteen starts, and he did finish a nose in front of one of the market leaders, Mill Stream, in a Newmarket handicap last year. However, he's on 19lb worse terms now and even without allowing for progression or regression, he'd be doing well to maintain that form. He's one of the pace runners, he does get further than this having won a seven-furlong handicap here last September and deserves his chance at this level. But he's also one of the lowest rated runners in the contest having just his second spin in Pattern company after finishing unplaced in a Group 3 at Haydock last time.

THE QUEEN ELIZABETH II JUBILEE STAKES

RUNNER BY RUNNER GUIDE

CONTINUED

SHARTASH



Won the 2022 Railway Stakes at the Curragh for Johnny Murtagh as a 2yo with the brilliant 119 rated juvenile, Blackbeard in behind, but seemingly lost his way following that prior to joining the Archie Watson yard this season after being purchased for 150,000 euros at the Arqana Arc Sale in France. He's won both starts over seven-furlongs for his new handler, including a Listed contest at Haydock last time when he looked like he was going to romp home before tiring over the closing stages. His uplift in form has coincided with a gelding op, and although a 4yo stepping into Group 1 company for the first time since his juvenile season, it's likely he has more to offer.

SHOULD AEBEENARING



Has only been in the winner's circle twice in nearly two years, and one of those was on the all-weather at Southwell, however, he's a consistent type that was only a lip behind Mill Stream at York two back and was beaten a short margin when runner-up in the Group 1 Betfair Sprint Cup last September. Whilst he doesn't win out of turn, he does enjoy quick ground and he's drawn on the grandstand side with two pace runners in Art Power & Quinault to his inside, which should see him with a nice tow into the race.

THE WIZARD OF EYE



Hasn't been over this trip since winning a Novice as a 2yo at Newbury three years ago. He was last seen making his seasonal return on his first start for Charlie Fellows when winning the Victoria Cup over seven-furlongs here last month. He did pick up strongly from the back that day off what was no more than an honest gallop, but he now steps into Group 1 company at set-weights. The last time he was seen at this level was when well held in the Lockinge over the mile last year. It must be said that he lacks form at the very top level, and he's likely to be handing them a decent start, but it looks a soft renewal of the race this year, he'll have a strong gallop to aim at, and the booking of Ryan Moore catches the eye.

WASHINGTON HEIGHTS



Has just the two wins to his name, but he's only finished outside the top four once in thirteen starts and he does enjoy it firm under foot. He made all when getting the better of Mill Stream in the Abernant on his seasonal return before running fourth in a four-way photo behind the same rival at York last time. He has plenty of natural pace but with Quinault drawn next door and Art Power only three stalls away, he's likely to end up grabbing the tail of the leaders with all the favours.

BELIEVING



Ran with merit in defeat when beaten just over a length finishing fourth in the King Charles III on the Tuesday. She drew down on the inside that day and although they finished on that side, the first two home drew high and only drifted across late and whilst it's difficult to analysis the straight course, she may have been better served with a higher draw. Her last two runs have been career bests and she's a Group 3 winner over this trip in France. The quick turnaround must be a consideration, but she did win off a seven day turn around last year, albeit it at a lower level.

SWINGALONG



Ran like she needed the spin on her seasonal return at York last month and is likely to strip fitter here. She won the Lowther as a 2yo and ran with merit in behind the brilliant Shaquille when placed in the Commonwealth Cup last year on her first visit to Ascot. Her only other visit here was when running well in defeat to finish fourth in behind Art Power and Kinross in the Champions Sprint, and whilst this would require a career best, she's not the worse outsider.

VADREAM



Is a handy type that was placed in the Jersey Stakes here in 2021 but tends to come up short at the top level. She was well beaten in this race in 2022 and in the King Stand last year. She arrives having finished a long way behind Asfoora in the King Charles III (formerly known as King Stand) on Tuesday despite being drawn on the same side as the first two home.

VERDICT

Whilst **MITHABBY** has recorded four of his six wins over five-furlongs and both his victories over this trip have come on flat tracks, it was impossible not to be impressed with the way he picked up when taking out the Greenland Stakes at the Curragh last time at just his third start for Charlie Hills. He's shown in the past he has a turn of foot over five furlongs, and you just know that Jamie Spencer is going to park up him out the back waiting for the last shot off what should be strong gallop.



EXPERT TIPS

BY SKY SPORTS RACING PUNDIT JAMES FLAHERTY



CONTINUOUS | THE HARDWICKE STAKES | 15:05



CONTINUOUS is a proper Group 1 horse and I think he is a class above his rivals here. This is a horse who was a dominant winner of the Leger at Doncaster, before finishing his three-year-old campaign with a very respectable fifth in the Arc, despite being short of room at a vital stage. I don't think there is anything else in this field capable of that and while he does have to concede race fitness, I don't think he would be lacking much in terms of work at this stage of the campaign. It is entirely different to a horse making his return in early May. I'll be disappointed if he's beaten.

RIVER TIBER | THE JERSEY STAKES | 16:25



The Jersey Stakes looks a match if the market is to be believed. I tend to agree and feel like **RIVER TIBER** is the right favourite to turn the tables on Haatem, who is extremely likeable in his own right and probably deserves a big race success given how he has run in both Guineas. This will be his fourth run in relatively quick succession though, a couple of those seeming like hard races and River Tiber should improve from his seasonal return in the Irish Guineas. I think this trip promises to bring out the best in him and he has a 3lb swing at the weights. I think he rates a very likely winner, with the ground ideal and he won the Coventry at this meeting last year.

MUMS TIPPLE | THE WOKINGHAM STAKES | 17:05



Of those drawn low, I quite like Juan Les Pins, a good third in the race last year, but his form lines drew me to **MUMS TIPPLE**, one place further back in that contest. He has been well treated by the handicapper to return off a 4lb lower mark, a 9lb swing with last year's second and third who finished marginally ahead of him. I didn't have to go back that far to find his last good run, as he was a head second to Mount Athos at Kempton in March off 102. His lower turf mark is obviously factored in, but he has dropped 6lb in his four turf starts since last year's race and he hasn't run at all badly in a couple of those. He likes it here too, with form figures of 1024 at this trip, and the unplaced effort was in the Group 1 Commonwealth Cup. His second came off a mark of 99 so 95 is clearly manageable and just 4lbs higher than his last win on turf. He looks sure to run well.

DARK TROOPER | THE WOKINGHAM STAKES | 17:05



On the other side of the track, I'm going to chance **DARK TROOPER** for the all-conquering Wathnan Racing. He is near the top of the market, but he has plenty in his favour. They have made some incredibly shrewd purchases, and this may well be another one. He looked a Group class sprinter last year when winning four on the bounce to go from 83 to 101, but his winning run came to an end in a Group 3 here. His latest win at Saint Cloud might just be the start of further progress though and I think he might still prove to be Group class. He won twice over course and distance during that hot streak, the latter of those a rather cosy success off 5lb lower than this mark. That form has worked out quite well and prior to that he was dominant over course and distance. He will need luck given his running style and his draw near the rail but he could just thrive in this sort of race as he often travels powerfully. At his price, I am happy to chance him win only. Of the others drawn high, Albasheer is hard to knock, and I wouldn't put anyone off him.

PORTSMOUTH | THE GOLDEN GATES STAKES | 17:40



I thought **PORTSMOUTH** has shaped better than the bare result on each of his last two runs. He has been too keen, but a strongly run race at this trip on quick ground could be ideal for him. He did remarkably well at Goodwood to last as long as he did considering how much he was over-racing in the early stages. That form looks hot as the winner is now rated 20lb higher following a close fourth in a Listed race next time, while the third and fourth both won next time. He settled a little better at Epsom and looked to be coming to challenge Persica before that rival went away again inside the final furlong. His position didn't help him though and he was trying to make up ground on a rival that was quickening.

HOLLIE DOYLE

Sky Sports Racing ambassador Hollie Doyle is hoping lightning strikes twice in the Wokingham Stakes at Royal Ascot on Saturday when she aims for a second consecutive win in the prestigious cavalry charge



HOT LIKE ME | THE CHESHAM STAKES | 14:30



HOT LIKE ME has never seen a racecourse before but makes her debut for Newmarket trainer Richard Spencer in the Listed Chesham Stakes on Saturday. I was out of luck for Richard and owner Phil Cunningham on The Man in the Norfolk Stakes on Thursday so hopefully we can make our presence felt over this stiff 7f. Taking on colts without the benefit of a run is going to be tough but she's highly regarded and I have sat on her at home. She's a lovely daughter of Ghaiyyath whose dam was Group placed over the same trip as a two-year-old.

ALBASHEER | THE WOKINGHAM STAKES | 17:05



My best chance of a winner on the final day of Royal Ascot is enigmatic sprinter **ALBASHEER**, who takes on 26 rivals in the Wokingham Stakes on Saturday - one of the toughest handicaps of the season. Archie Watson's speedball was in red hot form on the All-Weather over the winter, winning twice at Newcastle, but can exploit an 8lb lower rating on turf. He's no stranger to big summer handicaps, however, dead-hearting with Summerhand in a valuable race at York's Ebor Festival last August and then finishing fourth in the Ayr Gold Cup. I'd prefer not to be drawn high in stall 31 but I know what he's capable of. Like a lot of sprint handicappers, he just needs things to fall right and it depends what mood he's in on the day. He loves flashing past horses when he's on a going day and I hope I've made the right decision choosing him ahead of stable companion Saint Lawrence, who I won the race on last year.

GREY CUBAN | THE GOLDEN GATES STAKES | 17:40



I rode **GREY CUBAN** in a big handicap at Epsom on Derby Day and am back on board in the Golden Gates Stakes on Saturday. Hugo Palmer's three-year-old, who won for me at Wolverhampton back in the spring, ran well that day on his first try at the distance in a race that turned into a sprint. The 10f trip suits him well, he's well drawn down against the fence and will hopefully cope with the fast conditions, so could be a live outsider.

TRUESHAN | THE QUEEN ALEXANDRA STAKES | 18:15



It was disappointing that **TRUESHAN** couldn't run in the Gold Cup on Thursday due to unsuitable ground - the fourth consecutive year that a lack of rain cost him his chance. Alan King declared him for the Queen Alexandra Stakes over 2m6f on Saturday in the hope of an unexpected cloud burst but prevailing conditions look certain to rule him out of the longest race of the week. Trueshan's fit and well and, assuming Saturday doesn't happen for him, will be back as soon as he gets his favoured conditions.

TIMEFORM TIPS

RACE

1

1st **BEDTIME STORY** (14)

2nd **AGE OF GOLD** (1)

3rd **PENTLE BAY** (11)

RACE

2

1st **CONTINUOUS** (2)

2nd **MIDDLE EARTH** (8)

3rd **DESERT HERO** (4)

RACE

3

1st **SHARTASH** (8)

2nd **MILL STREAM** (5)

3rd **KINROSS** (4)

RACE

4

1st **RIVER TIBER** (14)

2nd **HAATEM** (1)

3rd **TASK FORCE** (17)

RACE

5

1st **ALBASHEER** (16)

2nd **STRIKE RED** (24)

3rd **UNEQUAL LOVE** (9)

RACE

6

1st **PRIMO LARA** (7)

2nd **HAND OF GOD** (8)

3rd **PALACE GREEN** (9)

RACE

7

1st **TASHKHAN** (7)

2nd **QUEENSTOWN** (13)

3rd **DAWN RISING** (2)



Desert Hero wins the King George V Stakes, Royal Ascot 2023



Kinross wins the Sky Bet City Of York Stakes, Sky Bet Ebor Festival 2023

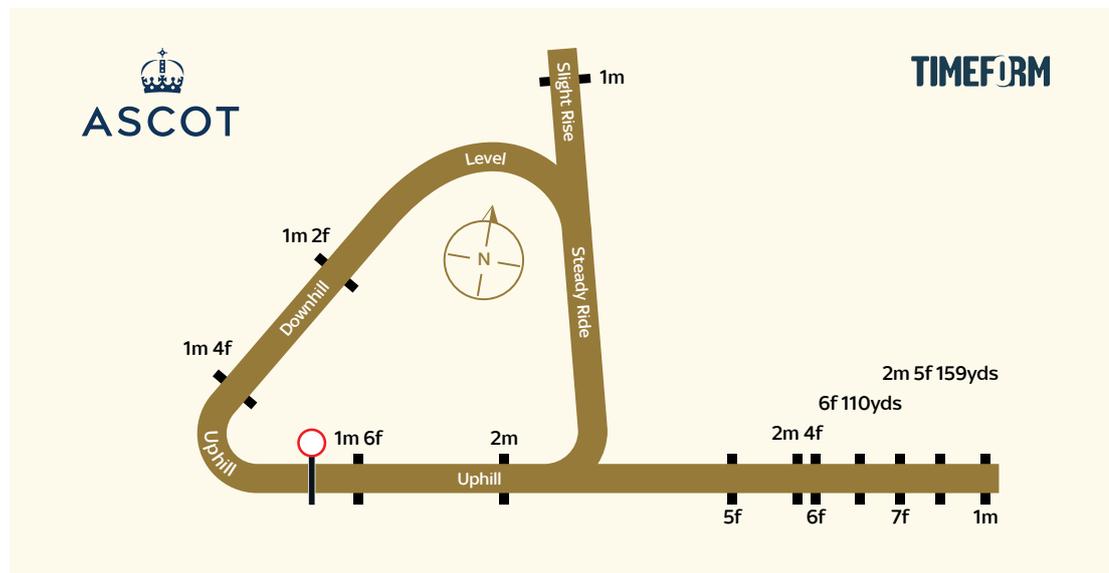


River Tiber wins the Coventry Stakes, Royal Ascot 2023

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.

