



Friday 23rd October

CHELTENHAM

1.15

WILLIAM HILL EPIC BOOSTS HANDICAP HURDLE (3) 2m3f200y (4010 Metres)

RACE 1

(13) NORMAN FLETCHER | (12) CROOKED PATH | (2) EAST INDIA EXPRESS

1.50

CATESBY ESTATES 'CHASING EXCELLENCE' NOVICES' CHASE (2) 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)

RACE 2

(2) BOWENSONFIRE | (1) PASSING DIAMOND | (3) JARRIVE DE MEE

2.25

FOUNDATION DEVELOPMENTS CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE (Qualifier) (3) 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 3

(5) THE HARDEST GEEZER | (7) WONDERING WHY | (6) CONTINUANCE

3.00

ODDSCHECKER NOVICES' HURDLE (Sharp) (Grade 2) (1) 2m87y (3300 Metres)

RACE 4

(2) COOLTOBECARELESS | (1) BELLS GROVE | (9) PLANTERS PUNCH

3.35

squareintheair.com HANDICAP CHASE (2) 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)

RACE 5

(2) CALICO | (1) JPR ONE | (3) SOUL ICON

4.10

MCCOY CONTRACTORS NOVICES' HURDLE (2) 2m3f200y (4010 Metres)

RACE 6

(2) MR HOLLYWOOD | (6) KINGSTONIAN | (3) DATSTHEHOLYALLOFIT

4.45

CHAPEL DOWN AMATEUR RIDERS' HANDICAP CHASE (3) 3m1f (5030 Metres)

RACE 7

(3) LITTLE LEDGEND | (7) FAIRLAWN SKIPPER | (9) UNANSWERED PRAYERS

KEY TO SYMBOLS

**Top Rated:** The horse with the best chance based solely on past form, specially tailored to a 0-100 scale.**Horses For Courses:** A suitable track for the horse, compared to its lifetime record on similar courses as defined by Timeform's course data.**Jockey Uplift:** The engaged rider has a notably higher Timeform Jockey Ranking than those who've ridden the horse on its most recent starts**Trainer Form:** A hot trainer to follow, based on Timeform ratings-related measurements looking at the recent performance of runners.

1.15

RACE 1

WILLIAM HILL EPIC BOOSTS HANDICAP HURDLE (3) 3yo+
(Rated 0-140) £25,000 2m3f200y (4010 Metres)



Going: **Good (Good to Soft in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Strong**

1	AL GASPARO (FR) (476) (D)	96
	531010/63- 7 12-0 76.2kg Kayley Woollacott <i>Mr Lucas Murphy (71lb/3kg)</i> Very useful hurdler in 2024/25. Promising third in beginners chase on final start for Gavin Cromwell last spring. Returns to Rules having won all 5 of his completed point starts for present yard (latest in May) and booking of promising 7-lb amateur can only help his cause.	
2	EAST INDIA EXPRESS (IRE) (187) (CD)	99
	71/FP920P- 7 11-9 73.9kg Nicky Henderson <i>Freddie Gordon</i> C&D winner who sent off favourite when falling in 2025 renewal of this race. Better than ever to go close in valuable handicap at Windsor on New Year's Day. Lost all chance when well backed in Martin Pipe and presumably over the top at Plumpton subsequently. Makes appeal given his record fresh.	
3	JOHN BARBOUR (194) (D)	95
	0/41212P1- 7 11-4 71.7kg Fergal O'Brien <i>Liam Harrison</i> Steadily-progressive sort who's won 3 of his 6 handicap starts. Probably found the ground quicker than ideal when grinding out an end-of-season victory at Wincanton (21f). Should find conditions more to his liking here, and may well have benefited from a break ahead of this step up in class.	
4	MORNING MAYHEM (14)	99
	41444122 5 11-2 70.8kg Nick Scholfield <i>Kielan Woods</i> Another success story for up-and-coming yard, landing a fifth success in Cartmel Cup in August. Continued his relentless progress when runner-up in pair of very competitive handicaps since, latterly in Welsh Champion Hurdle at Chepstow (2m). He'll be at least as effective back at this trip, too.	
5	LA PINSONNIERE (FR) (100)	99
	22/332-934 6 11-1 70.3kg Nicky Henderson <i>James Bowen</i> Useful mare. Runner-up in competitive listed novice sole previous start at this track. Best effort last season when 3 lengths third in competitive handicap at Kempton (21f) in March. Returns to hurdling off 3 lb lower (didn't take to chasing), for top yard who've been fairly quiet in recent months.	
6	FRONTIER PRINCE (30) (D)	96
	135334-01 5 10-10 68.0kg Fergal O'Brien <i>J. Hogan</i> Improved to finish third in a course novice handicap (2m, heavy) in November. Didn't better that form in the remainder of 2025/6 season. Enhanced his good record fresh when winning on return at Perth last month, but he needs more to follow up in stronger company.	
7	HANDLETHEKETTLE (IRE) (49) (D)	97
	2151/311-2 7 10-10 68.0kg Jamie Snowden <i>Gavin Sheehan</i> Lightly-raced front runner who has an excellent strike rate. Again ran well fresh/impressed with his jumping when runner-up in his bid to make it 4-4 at Worcester last month. That form has taken a few knocks, though, and this looks his toughest test in handicaps to date.	
8	SUNNY SOUTH WEST (IRE) (260)	97
	51/511462- 6 10-9 67.6kg Edward F. Power, Ireland <i>M. J. Kenneally (31lb/1kg)</i> Useful bumper scorer who made a winning debut in the sphere at Cork (17f) last July. Still relatively unexposed over this trip and makes just his second handicap hurdle start following a breakthrough success on the Flat at Thurles earlier this month. Interesting Irish raider under promising claimer.	
9	CAN HAPPEN (IRE) (34)	95
	573P0-191 6 10-7 66.7kg Peter John Flood, Ireland <i>Miss Georgie Benson (71lb/3kg)</i> Resumed progress to make it 2 wins from 3 hurdle starts with a smooth-travelling display (won by ¾ length) under this claimer at Navan (21f) last time. Races off an 8 lb higher mark on British debut and that's probably enough to prevent a follow up.	

10	CLOONAINRA (IRE) (28) (D)	97
	984-50729 7 10-4 65.3kg John McConnell, Ireland <i>Paddy Hanlon (51lb/2kg)</i> Back to her fairly useful best when runner-up in handicap hurdle at Kilbeggan (19f) in August. Underlined her inconsistency back over fences at Listowel the following month. Looks to have a bit to find on return to hurdles, for all her Irish yard usually targets this meeting.	
11	SNATCH A GLANCE (103)	97
	131F3-343 6 10-2(10-1) 64.4kg (64.0kg) Fergal O'Brien <i>Fern O'Brien (51lb/2kg)</i> Bumper/maiden hurdle winner at Ludlow. Shaped with promise to hit the frame in a couple of summer handicaps at Market Rasen/Stratford. Likely found a busy spell catching up with him on latest start in July. Goes well fresh and certainly isn't a no-hoper from just out of the weights.	
12	CROOKED PATH (IRE) (8)	99
	262331-31 4 10-2(10-0) 64.4kg (63.5kg) James Owen <i>Jonathan Burke</i> Third behind Morning Mayhem in solid handicap at Market Rasen (17f). Career best when convincingly winning a weaker event at Fontwell (19f) 8 days ago. Only his third hurdle start for yard with a fine knack of improving horses, and he's still very much unexposed over this sort of trip.	
13	NORMAN FLETCHER (6) (BF)	100
	37-725322 7 10-2(10-0) 64.4kg (63.5kg) Nigel & Willy Twiston-Davies <i>Jamie Brace (51lb/2kg)</i> Runner-up at this fixture in 2024. Now on a very handy mark following a winless spell stretching back to that season. Again shaped as though ready to capitalise when well-backed second at Newton Abbot (2¾m) 6 days ago. Back in deeper waters with a leading chance at the weights for in-form yard.	

13 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:
7-1 East India Express, 15-2 Norman Fletcher, 15-2 Crooked Path, 8-1 Sunny South West, 12-1 Morning Mayhem, 12-1 Handlethekettle, 12-1 Frontier Prince, 14-1 John Barbour, 16-1 La Pinsonniere, 20-1 Cloonainra, 20-1 Snatch A Glance, 20-1 Al Gasparo, 20-1 Can Happen

TIMEFORM VIEW:
NORMAN FLETCHER has been knocking on the door from a much reduced mark in recent weeks, and he may well record a long overdue second handicap success. Crooked Path and East India Express are feared most among the home brigade, with Sunny South West the pick of the Irish trio.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:
1. NORMAN FLETCHER 2. CROOKED PATH 3. EAST INDIA EXPRESS

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

2025	French Ship	5-11-5	6-1	Philip Hobbs & Johnson White	Ben Jones	20
2024	Wyenot	5-11-1	7-1	Henry Daly	Alice Stevens (5)	13
2023	Pinnacle Peak	8-10-1	28-1	Martin Keighley	Adam Wedge	16
2022	Seddon	9-11-3	10-1	John McConnell	B. W. Harvey (5)	13
2021	Guard Your Dreams	5-11-12	16-5f	Nigel Twiston-Davies	Sam Twiston-Davies	12

SMART STATS:
No Smart Stats available for this race

1.50

RACE 2

CATESBY ESTATES 'CHASING EXCELLENCE' NOVICES' CHASE
(2) 4yo+ £40,000 1m7f199y (3200 Metres)



Going: **Good (Good to Soft in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Weak**

1	PASSING DIAMOND (IRE) (13) (D)			
	33-113111 6 11-12 75.3kg			
	Ben Haslam			Richie McLernon
	Progressive front runner who has won 5 of his 6 starts this season, including when making it 3 from 3 over fences at Hexham 2 weeks ago, jumping impeccably once again. More needed if he's to defy a double penalty but that's entirely possible, especially if getting his own way in front.			
2	BOWENSONFIRE (FR) (20) (D)		h	100
	1107-4233 6 11-4 71.7kg			
	Gordon Elliott, Ireland			J. W. Kennedy
	Smart 2m hurdler. Yet to match that form in this sphere but has been brought along steadily, beaten only 2 lengths in a Grade 3 at Gowran 3 weeks ago despite not being well placed. Sets a clear standard.			
3	JARRIVE DE MEE (FR) (29) (D)			95
	111/46-6 7 11-4 71.7kg			
	W. P. Mullins, Ireland			Mr P. W. Mullins
	Landed the odds first 3 starts over hurdles in 2024/25 and didn't look out of place at the top level when fourth at Punchestown Festival (3m). Offered something to work on both starts over fences (maidens), shaping well at Listowel 4 weeks ago until a 14-month absence took its toll. Down in trip.			
4	GLEN TO GLEN (IRE) (8)		s	95
	10-5R138F 4 11-0 69.9kg			
	Nick Scholfield			Kielan Woods
	Possibly not straightforward and while he has shown better form since joining this yard (winner at Perth this summer), his suspect jumping will be put to the test around here.			
5	ICE JET (IRE) (38) (D)		t	97
	72-111221 4 11-0 69.9kg			
	Dan Skelton 			Harry Skelton
	Completed a quick-fire hat-trick over hurdles in the spring and showed much improved form on third start over fences when making all in emphatic fashion at Uttoxeter last month. However, blotted his copybook when refusing to race at Kelso (withdrawn) October 4th. Tongue strap back on.			

5 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

7-4 Bowensonfire, 3-1 Ice Jet, 4-1 Jarrive De Mee, 7-1 Passing Diamond, 12-1 Glen To Glen

TIMEFORM VIEW:

BOWENSONFIRE was easily the best of these over hurdles and he's also achieved the most over fences so far, so his claims are crystal clear. Bold-jumping front runner Passing Diamond could offer most resistance despite a double penalty.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. BOWENSONFIRE 2. PASSING DIAMOND 3. JARRIVE DE MEE

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:					
2025	Alnilam 6-11-9	9-4jf	Olly Murphy	Sean Bowen	7
2024	Path d'Oroux 7-11-4	8-15f	Gavin Patrick Cromwell	Keith Donoghue	4
2023	My Mate Mozzie 7-11-4	4-7f	Gavin Patrick Cromwell	Keith Donoghue	4
2022	Straw Fan Jack 7-11-9	5-2	Sheila Lewis	Sean Houlihan	7
2021	Third Time Lucki 6-11-2	11-8f	Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton	5

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

2.25

RACE 3

FOUNDATION DEVELOPMENTS CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE (Qualifier) (3) 3yo+ (Rated 0-140) £20,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)



Going: **Good (Good to Soft in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Strong**

1	LORIKO (FR) (37) (D, BF) 94
62-112113	5 12-0 74.2kg
	Dan Skelton Mr Dominic Lewis (10lb/5kg)
Thrived for top yard this summer. Won 4 small-field races, beating subsequent winners at Market Rasen/Sedgefield more recently. Quick turnaround seemingly took its toll when beaten on hat-trick bid at Kelso (21f) latest. Has been freshened up and now faces an acid test in stronger company.	
2	FIVEONEFIVE (IRE) (64) (D) s 98
P00-84319	8 11-11 74.8kg
	Cian Michael Collins, Ireland C. P. Millar (3lb/1kg)
Useful 3-time Cartmel winner. Career-best success in big-field handicap at Galway Festival in August. Looked back in form returning from short break on the Flat latest. Weighted to better his fifth in last year's renewal of this race, with yard's British runners going well so far this season.	
3	WILD GOOSE (IRE) (22) (D) t 97
U51421-51	6 11-5 72.1kg
	Kim Bailey & Mat Nicholls Fern O'Brien
Finished last season with a decisive victory at Hereford (2m). Resumed progress with success at Southwell second time up this season, doing well to get up after meeting trouble. Step up in grade demands more again, though.	
4	MOJITO DES MOTTES (FR) (13) (D) t 97
2442-P134	4 11-4 71.7kg
	Ben Pauling Beau Morgan (3lb/1kg)
Hold-up type. Much improved when an easy winner of 5-runner handicap at Newton Abbot (17f) second time up this season. Hasn't built on that in a couple of subsequent starts, finishing well-held fourth (no excuses the way it unfolded) in a well-run juvenile handicap at Chepstow latest.	
5	THE HARDEST GEEZER (IRE) (258) (D) h ★ 100
515/2244F-	7 11-1 70.3kg
	Philip Hobbs & Johnson White Jack Stenhouse (8lb/4kg)
Strong form when fourth in consecutive 2m handicaps at Ascot/Windsor last winter. Off since taking a tumble in extreme conditions at Newbury in February (labouring at the time). Interesting back in calmer waters, provided he's back on song/tractable on first start in 8 months (can pull hard).	
6	CONTINUANCE (37) (D) 99
223-42292	5 11-0 69.9kg
	Martin Keighley Harry Atkins
Free-going sort. Runner-up in useful C&D handicap last December prior a solid third at Sandown. Hasn't quite scaled those heights in his summer campaign, though his only blip among 4 recent in-frame efforts came in a typically competitive Summer Hurdle. On a handy mark if recapturing his best.	
7	WONDERING WHY (IRE) (172) (D) 98
51/3216-1	5 10-13 69.4kg
	Ben Pauling Elliott England (8lb/4kg)
Low-mileage maiden hurdle/bumper winner. Back on the up when seeing off a handful of today's rivals to make a successful handicap debut in May (second/third have also won in recent weeks). In the right hands to keep improving and could play a significant hand if ready to roll.	
8	KAPITEIN KOOL (IRE) (14) (D) 98
5122170-3	5 10-12 68.9kg
	Seamus Mullins M. J. Kenneally (3lb/1kg)
Fairly useful heavy-ground novice winner at Exeter (17f) in February. Returned to form with sights lowered when 1¼-length third (not ideally placed) in Class 4 handicap at Chepstow on reappearance. Entitled to be sharper here and booking of top Irish conditional catches the eye.	
9	KING ULANDA (IRE) (22) s+t 97
PF6-14133	6 10-8 67.1kg
	Oliver Greenall & Josh Guerriero Ben Smith (6lb/3kg)
Made it 2 wins from 3 starts this season on return to hurdling at Uttoxeter (2m) in July. Hasn't matched that in a couple of handicaps since, promising more than he delivered when 7-length third at Southwell (2m). Type who'll benefit from return to a bigger field, though yard possibly under a cloud.	

10	FILS DE ROI (FR) (532) 90
626/9-	7 10-7 66.7kg
	Fergal O'Brien Tom Broughton
Fairly useful handicapper on his day. Beaten 10¼ lengths on reappearance in a strong renewal of this race in 2024. Only had 3 starts since, though (clearly isn't the easiest to train), returning 17 months on from a no-show at Market Rasen.	
11	EMERALD TIME (18) (D) t 96
76-513131	5 10-5 65.8kg
	Ryan Hatch James Turner
Smooth-travelling type who has learned to relax with racing. Resumed progress when making it 3 wins in 5 starts in novice handicap at Stratford (19f). Up in class, but a bigger field will suit his style and he's clearly going the right way.	
12	GOWER PRINCE (7lb/3kg ex) (12) (D) h 97
6P2-21221	8 10-5 65.8kg
	Jonjo & A.J. O'Neill Benjamin Macey (3lb/1kg)
Finished ahead of Mojito Des Mottes at Plumpton prior to gamely capitalising on a lower hurdles mark at the second attempt at Chepstow (2m, soft) 12 days ago. Proving more consistent since joining present yard (2 wins/4 seconds from 6 runs), though has more on at the weights under a 7-lb penalty.	
13	THANKYOUANDPLEASE (FR) (189) 99
207412U2-	6 10-3 64.9kg
	Syd Hosie Ellis Collier (3lb/1kg)
Smooth traveller who was thriving at the end of last season. Went through his race like there could be more to come when only bettered by a well-backed one at Ayr (heavy) in April. Forecast rain certainly no harm to his chances, however, yard is without a win since his last run.	

13 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

11-2 Wondering Why, 13-2 The Hardest Geezer, 7-1 Loriko, 8-1 Gower Prince, 11-1 Continuance, 12-1 Fiveonefive, 14-1 Kapitein Kool, 16-1 Wild Goose, 16-1 Emerald Time, 20-1 Thankyouandplease, 20-1 Mojito Des Mottes, 25-1 King Ulanda, 33-1 Fils De Roi

TIMEFORM VIEW:

THE HARDEST GEEZER has the strongest handicap form on offer, and he may well have the class to defy an 8-month absence. Wondering Why is in good hands and could prove the main threat if picking up where he left off last season. Continuance, Kapitein Kool and Fiveonefive all have recent match fitness on their side and need considering in a competitive renewal.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. THE HARDEST GEEZER 2. WONDERING WHY 3. CONTINUANCE

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

2025	Leloopa 5-10-9	14-1	Fergal O'Brien	Tom Broughton	12
2024	Impero 5-11-3	6-1	Cian Michael Collins	Danny Gilligan	10
2023	Our Champ 5-10-5	9-2jf	Chris Gordon	Freddie Gordon (3)	18
2022	Soul Icon 5-10-5	11-4f	Keiran Burke	Harry Kimber	15
2021	Samba Dancer 6-10-8	10-3	Fergal O'Brien	Liam Harrison (3)	12

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

3.00

RACE 4

ODDSCHECKER NOVICES' HURDLE (Sharp) (Grade 2) (1)
4yo+ £80,000 2m87y (3300 Metres)



Going: **Good (Good to Soft in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Strong**

1	BELLS GROVE (IRE) (34)	99
	3238-311 5 11-2 70.8kg Edward Buckley, Ireland Placed all 3 starts in bumpers for John McConnell and needed only to reproduce his hurdling debut form to land the odds at Ballinrobe (174f) in July. Showed improved form to follow up on handicap debut at Navan (2m) and needs taking seriously up in grade.	<i>K. E. Buckley</i>
2	COOLTOBECARELESS (IRE) (14) (D)	100
	210-1 5 11-2 70.8kg Dan Skelton Irish point/bumper winner who created an excellent impression when making a successful hurdling debut on the back of a breathing operation at Chepstow (2m) a fortnight ago, bursting further clear up the run-in. Sure to go on to better things.	<i>Harry Skelton</i>
3	ETERNAL ANGEL (FR) (33)	97
	55-121321 6 11-2 70.8kg Tom Lacey Progressive for current yard, registering a third success in 5-runner handicap hurdle at Plumpton (2m, good to firm) 33 days ago. Vulnerable to less-exposed types but should be capable of making presence felt.	<i>Stan Sheppard</i>
4	GOVERNORS ROCK (IRE) (19) (D)	79
	81100-1 5 11-2 70.8kg Warren Greatrex Dual bumper winner who was disappointing in listed/Grade 2 events for new connections last season but impressed in making a winning hurdling debut at Uttoxeter (2m) on return, showing enough speed to take care of a couple of fairly useful recruits from the Flat. This demands a lot more, though.	<i>James Bowen</i>
5	KINGOFTHEFRONTIER (143)	92
	31 5 11-2 70.8kg John Dawson Point winner who confirmed the promise of his hurdling debut with victory in 2½m maiden at Southwell in June. Hiked in grade now and, while he's open to further improvement, this drop back in trip isn't sure to suit.	<i>Conor O'Farrell</i>
6	SIXPACK (31) (D)	95
	4-1 6 11-2 70.8kg James Owen Had won a further 3 races on the Flat this year and left behind a low-key hurdling debut when successful in 4-runner novice at Warwick (2m) 31 days ago. Faces a much stiffer task at this level but good chance there's more to come from him in this sphere.	<i>Jonathan Burke</i>
7	SPANISH DARLING (FR) (16) (D)	91
	311 5 11-2 70.8kg Alex Hales Dual winning pointer who struck at the second time of asking in bumpers for Tom George at Worcester (2m) in September. Looked even better for the switch to hurdling when heavily eased down to win on hurdling debut there for new yard since and is open to plenty of improvement.	<i>Kielan Woods</i>
8	MATIWO (FR) (25) (D, BF)	92
	3F148-2 4 11-1 70.3kg Mrs Jane Williams Newbury juvenile hurdle winner who acquitted himself well when fourth in the Grade 2 Dovecote at Kempton in February. Seemed more in need of the run than the market anticipated when turned over at short odds by Scott's Legacy on return at Newton Abbot but has more on his plate back up in grade.	<i>Ciaran Gethings</i>
9	PLANTERS PUNCH (195) (D)	98
	111- 4 11-1 70.3kg Nicky Henderson In top hands and looked a useful prospect when winning all 3 starts in junior company last season. Type to go on improving and looks a novice to follow.	<i>Nico de Boinville</i>

10

SCOTT'S LEGACY (IRE) (25) (D)
51-1 4 11-1 | 70.3kg

Nigel & Willy Twiston-Davies
Showed a good attitude when making his second bumper start a winning one at Southwell in March and followed up on Newton Abbot hurdling debut/reappearance (17f, good) when handing reopposing Matiwo a 6-length beating last month. This is tougher but he's entitled to progress.

92

Sam Twiston-Davies

10 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

11-4 Cooltobecareless, 3-1 Planters Punch, 17-2 Bells Grove, 10-1 Spanish Darling, 11-1 Sixpack, 14-1 Eternal Angel, 14-1 Scott's Legacy, 22-1 Matiwo, 22-1 Governors Rock, 33-1 Kingofthefrontier

TIMEFORM VIEW:

COOLTOBECARELESS burst clear in the manner of one ready for a higher-grade 2m novice on his recent hurdling debut at Chepstow and is taken to provide his top trainer with a third consecutive win in this race. Bells Grove was much improved when supplementing his Ballinrobe maiden success switched to a handicap at Navan last time and commands respect with the timefigure supporting the performance. Planters Punch went unbeaten in junior company last season and looks promising, too.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. COOLTOBECARELESS 2. BELLS GROVE 3. PLANTERS PUNCH

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:				
2025	Fortune de Mer	5-11-2	14-1 Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton 12
2024	Valgrand	5-11-2	3-1 Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton 6
2023	Lookaway	6-11-2	9-2 Neil King	Jack Quinlan 8
2022	Fennor Cross	5-11-2	3-1 John McConnell	S. D. Torrens 8
2021	I Like To Move It	4-11-3	4-6f Nigel Twiston-Davies	Sam Twiston-Davies 3

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

3.35

RACE 5

squareintheair.com HANDICAP CHASE (2) 4yo+ £100,000
1m7f199y (3200 Metres)



Going: **Good (Good to Soft in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Strong**

1	 JPR ONE (IRE) (181) (D) 5/3321442- 9 12-0 76.2kg Joe Tizzard Better than ever last season, winning the Scottish Champion Chase (handicap) at Musselburgh. Kept top company on his next 3 starts and was only just denied in the Celebration Chase at Sandown on his final start. Good record fresh and is bound to go well.	s+t	99	<i>Brendan Powell</i>
2	 CALICO (GER) (160) (CD) 32/11404-5 10 11-4 71.7kg Dan Skelton Bidding for a hat-trick of wins in this race having made a winning return for the last 2 seasons. This has likely been the target once again and he's 1 lb lower than for his last win at Ascot in November.	s+t	 100	<i>Harry Skelton</i>
3	 SOUL ICON (62) (C, D) 29/U45B-62 9 10-10 68.0kg Keiran Burke Almost 2 years since his last win but he hasn't had that much racing in that time and he's now 3 lb below his winning chase mark. Arrives fit from the Flat (ran very well) so not taken lightly back down in trip.	t	98	<i>Adam Wedge</i>
4	 TRAPRAIN LAW (FR) (188) (D, BF) 7P/242133- 8 10-3 64.9kg Lucinda Russell & Michael Scudamore Successful at Wetherby last winter during a consistent spell but he was over 13 lengths behind Calico in this last year and is only 1 lb lower now.	t	98	<i>Mr Lucas Murphy (7lb/3kg)</i>
5	 PALACIO (FR) (188) (D) 25/IP3U1P- 8 10-2(10-1) 64.4kg (64.0kg) Sam Thomas Free-going sort who had a mixed campaign over fences last season, though one of his wins was at Chepstow on his return. Not seen since producing an appalling round of jumping at Ayr in April.	t	97	<i>Dylan Johnston</i>
6	 SKY LORD (33) (D) 5433-7413 7 10-2(10-0) 64.4kg (63.5kg) Henry de Bromhead, Ireland Has tended to finish weakly over fences but made the most of a good opportunity in first-time headgear in maiden at Wexford in July. Useful form when third at Listowel since but this stiff finish is unlikely to suit.	s+t	97	<i>M. P. O'Connor</i>
7	 SANS BRUIT (FR) (188) (D) 1/6654435- 8 10-2(10-0) 64.4kg (63.5kg) Paul Nicholls Ideally suited by front-running tactics and landed Red Rum at Aintree for second successive year 18 months ago. Not so good last season but has since had a breathing operation and reappears potentially well handicapped.	t	96	<i>Harry Cobden</i>
8	 IN THE AIR (FR) (7lb/3kg ex) (9) (D) 1217-4121 8 10-2(10-0) 64.4kg (63.5kg) Alastair Ralph Can boast a pretty good strike rate throughout his career and enhanced it further when beating 3 rivals at Wetherby 9 days ago. Likely to find a 7-lb penalty in much better race too much for him, though.		94	<i>Ciaran Gethings</i>
9	 DUKE OF LUCKLEY (IRE) (22) (D, BF) PPP-13114 9 10-2(9-11) 64.4kg (62.1kg) Martin Keighley Showed a likeable attitude when making it 3 wins in small-field chases this season at Kelso last month. Ridden too forcefully in his bid to exploit a lower hurdles mark next time but likely to find this too competitive from 5 lb out of the handicap.	v	94	<i>James Best</i>

9 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

7-2 Calico, 9-2 Jpr One, 13-2 Sky Lord, 8-1 Traprain Law, 8-1 Palacio, 10-1 Sans Bruit, 12-1 Soul Icon, 14-1 In The Air, 22-1 Duke of Luckley

TIMEFORM VIEW:

CALICO can win this for the third successive season on his return with his chief rival JPR One keeping over half the field out of the handicap. Soul Icon may prove best of the others.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. CALICO 2. JPR ONE 3. SOUL ICON

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

2025	Calico	9-10-10	5-1	Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton	9
2024	Calico	8-10-13	3-1	Dan Skelton	Harry Skelton	8
2023	Dancing On My Own	9-11-13	14-1	Henry de Bromhead	Rachael Blackmore	11
2022	Dads Lad	7-10-10	7-2	W. P. Mullins	B. Hayes	7
2021	Before Midnight	8-10-3	2-1f	Sam Thomas	Sam Twiston-Davies	7

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

4.10

RACE 6

MCCOY CONTRACTORS NOVICES' HURDLE (2) 4yo+ £20,000
2m3f200y (4010 Metres)



Going: **Good (Good to Soft in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Very Weak**

1	COSMOS D'AINAY (FR) (30) 3/193-113 6 11-8 73.5kg  Gordon Elliott, Ireland <i>J. W. Kennedy</i> Impressed when opening his hurdles account at the third time of asking at Cork in July and made the most of a good opportunity when following up at Perth (2m). Faced a stiff task when third of 4 at Listowel since and should benefit from this return to further.	99
2	MR HOLLYWOOD (IRE) (86) 31 6 11-5 72.1kg  W. P. Mullins, Ireland <i>Mr P. W. Mullins</i> Smart on Flat (stays 2¾m) and built on his hurdling debut promise to land a 2¾m Galway maiden in July, staying on to lead close home. That form is proving strong and he's been highly tried back on the level since. Leading chance.	100
3	DATSTHEHOLYALLOFIT (IRE) (29) (D) 44-12311 5 11-1 70.3kg  Patrick Neville  <i>Brian Hughes</i> Bumper winner who was suited by the longer trip when making it third time lucky over hurdles at Sedgefield (21f) in September and belied market weakness to follow up in a race with more depth at Perth (2½m). This is tougher still but shouldn't be underestimated with further progress likely.	97
4	OTIE'S FRIEND (IRE) (228) 271- 5 11-0 69.9kg  Nick Scholfield <i>Kielan Woods</i> Off the mark at the third attempt in bumpers with his sights lowered in 7-runner event (13/8) at Plumpton (2¼m, soft) in March. Longer trip bound to suit now going hurdling but starts out in a warm race.	
5	SAINT INVICTUS (IRE) (13) 257-0 5 11-0 69.9kg  Syd Hosie <i>Ellis Collier</i> £95,000 buy after finishing runner-up sole start in Irish points but showed only modest form in bumpers and made a discouraging start to his hurdling career at Chepstow recently.	
6	KINGSTONIAN (62) 3 4 10-12 68.9kg  Joseph Patrick O'Brien, Ireland <i>J. J. Slevin</i> Useful Flat winner (stays 2¼m) who shaped promisingly on his first go over hurdles when third of 16 in extended 2m maiden at Killarney in late-August. Respectable effort in a first-time visor in Irish Cesarewitch back on the level since and seems sure to improve for this longer trip.	99
7	MISTER COKO (FR) (16) 58-3 4 10-12 68.9kg  Nigel & Willy Twiston-Davies  <i>Sam Twiston-Davies</i> Failed to justify support on the first of 2 starts in bumpers but showed much more of why he'd been so well backed that day switched to hurdling when third of 12 in 2m novice at Worcester 16 days ago, despite racing on the seemingly unfavoured far side. Likely to improve over this longer trip.	83

7 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:
11-8 Mr Hollywood, **2-1** Kingstonian, **15-2** Cosmos D'ainay, **10-1** Datstheholyallofit, **22-1** Mister Coko, **25-1** Otie's Friend, **250-1** bar

TIMEFORM VIEW:
The form of MR HOLLYWOOD's Galway win is proving strong and there's surely more to come from him as a hurdler judged on his Flat ability, so he's taken to come out on top. Kingstonian is a very interesting rival however, himself well above average on the Flat and open to plenty of improvement over this longer trip.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:
1. MR HOLLYWOOD 2. KINGSTONIAN 3. DATSTHEHOLYALLOFIT

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:

2025	De Temps En Temps 6-11-5	22-1	Martin Keighley	Freddie Keighley	7
2024	Potters Charm 5-11-5	6-5f	Nigel Twiston-Davies	Sam Twiston-Davies	8
2023	Encanto Bruno 5-11-5	11-4f	Gavin Patrick Cromwell	Keith Donoghue	9
2022	Mofasa 6-11-5	7-2	Michael Scudamore	Luca Morgan	10
2021	Camprond 5-11-6	1-3f	Philip Hobbs	Aidan Coleman	3

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race

4.45

RACE 7

CHAPEL DOWN AMATEUR RIDERS' HANDICAP CHASE (3)
4yo+ (Rated 0-125) £20,000 3m1f (5030 Metres)



Going: **Good (Good to Soft in places)**

Left handed, undulating. Stiff fences that place a premium on sound jumping. The last half mile is uphill, although the lead changes hands on the run-in less frequently than might be expected. Prominent-racers often fare well on the chase course, especially in races up to 3m. On the New Course, the hurdles track has just two flights in the last six furlongs, resulting in more emphasis on stamina; large-field races over two miles often go to hold-up horses, as there can be a tendency to go for home too soon. Jockeys often steer a wide course in the winter months searching for better ground and this can lead to trouble in-running towards the stand rail in the straight.

Pace Information: **Even**

1	SNIPÉ (IRE) (16) (D)	s	98
	1416-2423 9 12-0 76.2kg Dan Skelton <i>Miss Heidi Palin</i> Two hunter chase wins last season before a creditable sixth in the Aintree Foxhunter in April. Better form in defeat in open handicaps this campaign but bit more needed if he's to defy top weight. Headgear back on.		
2	MY GIFT TO YOU (IRE) (117)	v+t	96
	14169-153 8 11-13 75.7kg James Owen <i>Mr Alex Chadwick</i> Likeable sort who proved at least as good as ever when making a winning hunter chase debut at Warwick (33f, good) in May but he was only fifth off his revised mark at Cartmel later in the month despite running as well as ever. Decent effort off lower hurdles mark the following month.		
3	LITTLE LEDGEND (IRE) (28)	s+t	100
	4223-2211 6 11-12 75.3kg Olly Murphy <i>Mr James King</i> Had a touch of seconditis in bumpers/over hurdles but he's 2 from 2 over fences (both wins at Worcester). Remains totally unexposed as a stayer and his rider has an excellent strike rate for this yard.		
4	BRANDT (IRE) (46)	t	99
	P/P0667-61 8 11-9 73.9kg Cian Michael Collins, Ireland <i>Mr J. L. Scallan</i> (5lb/2kg) Sprung a surprise back from 3 months off at Galway last month, responding well to a marked change of tactics (made all). Not sure if he will back that up but yard has a decent record in Britain.		
5	BEGGARS ROCK (IRE) (35) (BF)	b+t	96
	P63-60116 7 11-9 73.9kg Ian Patrick Donoghue, Ireland <i>Mr J. Dunne</i> (3lb/1kg) Returned to his very best when back-to-back winner at Wexford and Downpatrick in August but ran poorly back over hurdles next time despite a significantly lower mark. Significantly back up in trip.		
6	CEANNDANA (IRE) (27) (D)	s	97
	6/3923-543 9 11-5 72.1kg Ross O'Sullivan, Ireland <i>Mr L. P. Shanahan</i> (5lb/2kg) Probably better over hurdles and seemed stretched by this stiff test in the 2024 renewal.		
7	FAIRLAWN SKIPPER (37)		99
	4-901U121 6 11-4 71.7kg Mickey Bowen <i>Mr D. O'Connor</i> Dual hurdles winner this summer and just as good when making a winning chase bow at Kelso 5 weeks ago, jumping fine. Top amateur booked and likely to go well.		
8	JUPITER DES BORDES (FR) (202)	s+t	99
	2/3120559- 7 11-1 70.3kg Richard Hobson <i>Mr Hugo Hunt</i> (3lb/1kg) Peaked when a narrow winner at Warwick (3m) in December but bit to prove now having been out of form when last seen in the spring.		
9	UNANSWERED PRAYERS (IRE) (172) (C)	s	95
	6/555634-P 10 11-1 70.3kg Chris Gordon <i>Mr Henry Main</i> (5lb/2kg) On a losing run and was in poor form when last seen in the spring, but starts the new season potentially well treated at least (14 lb lower than when a close fifth in this last year on return).		
10	YOUDECIDE (IRE) (28)	s	99
	444P-1122 6 10-13 69.4kg Ben Pauling <i>Miss Gina Andrews</i> Has taken a step forward this season, recording a quick-fire double in August. Good runner-up efforts in better events at Worcester since but this step up in distance not expected to suit. Headgear back on.		

11

BETTER OFF ALONE (IRE) (19)
2/PP34P-31 7 10-7 | 66.7kg
Martin Keighley *Mr Sean O'Connor* (3lb/1kg)
Finally off the mark at Uttoxeter 19 days ago but that was a weak event and this sketchy jumper is likely to find this too demanding.

95

11 DECLARED RUNNERS

BETTING FORECAST:

5-2 Little Ledgend, 4-1 Fairlawn Skipper, 8-1 Youdecide, 14-1 Snipe, 14-1 Unanswered Prayers, 16-1 Brandt, 16-1 Better Off Alone, 22-1 Jupiter Des Bordes, 22-1 Ceanndana, 22-1 Beggars Rock, 22-1 My Gift To You

TIMEFORM VIEW:

LITTLE LEDGEND has thrived for the recent switch to chasing and can extend his unbeaten record to 3. Fellow novice Fairlawn Skipper made a winning chase bow in good style at Kelso last month and he looks the other potential improver in the field, while Unanswered Prayers is lurking on a dangerous mark on return.

TIMEFORM 1-2-3:

1. LITTLE LEDGEND 2. FAIRLAWN SKIPPER 3. UNANSWERED PRAYERS

WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:					
2025	Smugglers Haven 6-11-4	10-3f	Sara Bradstock	Miss Lily Bradstock (5)	18
2024	The Newest One 9-11-11	10-1	Nigel Twiston-Davies	Mr Toby McCain-Mitchell (5)	18
2023	Mole Court 6-11-4	9-1	Ben Pauling	Jack Andrews	19
2022	Jimmy The Digger 9-11-5	11-1	Henry Daly	Alice Stevens (5)	20
2021	Strictlyadancer 7-11-1	7-1	Christian Williams	Mr P. A. King	17

SMART STATS:

No Smart Stats available for this race