

Saturday 31st January

1.10	BET365 SCOTTISH TRIUMPH HURDLE (Listed) (1) 1m7f124y (3130 Metres)
RACE 1	<b>(5) MADE U BLUSH   (6) WONDERFULWONDERFUL   (4) SECRET FORCE</b>
1.43	BET365 SCOTTISH COUNTY HANDICAP HURDLE (2) 1m7f124y (3130 Metres)
RACE 2	<b>(4) WELSH CHARGER   (2) WILLIETHEBUILDER   (7) AFADIL</b>
2.20	bet365 SCOTTISH CHAMPION CHASE HANDICAP CHASE (2) 2½m68y (4090 Metres)
RACE 3	<b>(4) THE KALOOKI KID   (2) INSURRECTION   (6) TRAPRAIN LAW</b>
3.00	BET365 SCOTTISH STAYERS' NOVICES' HURDLE (2) 2m7f180y (4790 Metres)
RACE 4	<b>(1) ABSOLUTELY DOYEN   (5) SLEEDAGH   (4) WALKS THE TALK</b>
3.37	BET365 HANDICAP HURDLE (Qualifier) (4) 1m7f124y (3130 Metres)
RACE 5	<b>(4) MAGNA VICTOR   (8) PLATIN MOON   (9) GEMINI MAN</b>
4.11	EACH WAY EXTRA AT BET365 HANDICAP CHASE (Qualifier) (3) 2m7f138y (4750 Metres)
RACE 6	<b>(5) KELCE   (6) SAMMY SMART   (3) REXEM</b>

#### 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.

**1.10****BET365 SCOTTISH TRIUMPH HURDLE (Listed) (1) 4yo  
£50,000 1m7f124y (3130 Metres)**

RACE 1

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

A right-handed oval track a little over a mile and a quarter in extent, almost flat with sharp bends, favouring handy types as opposed to gallopers, especially as it's a quick-draining course that tends to produce less testing ground than most tracks in midwinter. A polytrack strip was installed on the bend running away from the stands towards the end of 2012 in order to protect ground which tended to get worn and bare due to overuse. The two-mile start is on a spur on the last bend. There are eight fences (four in each straight) to a circuit and, whilst not stiff, they do claim more casualties than might be expected, a lot of the handicaps catering for low-graders.

Pace Information: **Weak**

**1 LORD (GER) (56) 92**  
211161 4 11-5 | 72.1kg



Donald McCain

**Danny McMenamin**

Won 3 juvenile hurdles for Olly Murphy at the end of the summer and bounced back from a low-key first run for Donald McCain when making all in in listed juvenile at Aintree (17f, good to soft) in December. Will need more to defy his penalty here.

**2 FALLS OF ACHARN (30) (CD) 89**  
1 4 11-0 | 69.9kg



Paul Nicholls

**Freddie Gingell**

Progressive dual winner on Flat in Ireland for Jessica Harrington. 2/1, edged out Scarlet Moon (who gave him 7 lb) to make a winning start to his hurdle career in a C&D juvenile on New Year's Day. Will need to leave that bare form behind but his top stable's good record in this provides hope.

**3 SCARLET MOON (30) (D, BF) 94**  
3142 4 11-0 | 69.9kg



Archie Watson

**Ben Poste**

Four Flat wins this year at up to 1¾m and struck at the second time of asking over hurdles in Warwick juvenile in November. Bettered that form when only narrowly failing to concede 7 lb to Falls of Acharn over C&D on New Year's Day and meets that rival off level weights now.

**4 SECRET FORCE (IRE) (77) 97**  
14 4 11-0 | 69.9kg



Gavin Patrick Cromwell, Ireland

**Brian Hughes**

Fair Flat winner who looked an exciting prospect when impressive winner on Punchestown hurdle debut in October. Not in the same form when 15 lengths fourth in Cheltenham Grade 2 a month later but returns from a short break with the Gavin Cromwell stable back in form.

**5 MADE U BLUSH (33) 100**  
31 4 10-7 | 66.7kg



Dan Skelton

**Tristan Durrell**

Fairly useful Flat winner for Jonathan Portman who was beaten at short odds on her Warwick hurdle debut but made no mistake at Doncaster (2m, good) next time, cruising clear. Definitely more to come.

**6 WONDERFULWONDERFUL (IRE) (64) 98**  
14 4 10-7 | 66.7kg



John McConnell, Ireland

**Alex Harvey**

Fairly useful maiden on Flat and struck at first time of asking over hurdles in Killarney juvenile in August. Shaped better than result when 12½ lengths fourth of 12 in listed juvenile at Newbury in November, proving a bit too exuberant in front. This sharp 2m should suit her.

6 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**13-8 Secret Force, 7-2 Made U Blush, 13-2 Lord, 8-1 Scarlet Moon, 8-1 Falls of Acharn, 14-1 Wonderfulwonderful**

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

MADE U BLUSH easily accounted for 6 rivals at Doncaster over Christmas and her Flat form suggests she should be capable of better again for Dan Skelton. Fellow filly Wonderfulwonderful should be seen to good effect over this sharp 2m and is second choice ahead of the other Jimmy Fyffe runner Secret Force.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

**1. MADE U BLUSH 2. WONDERFULWONDERFUL 3. SECRET FORCE**

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	<b>St Pancras</b> 4-11-0	33-1	Toby Lawes	K. Brogan	10
2024	<b>Liari</b> 4-11-5	10-11f	Paul Nicholls	Harry Cobden	8
2023	<b>Afadil</b> 4-11-0	7-2	Paul Nicholls	Harry Cobden	6
2022	<b>Impulsive One</b> 4-11-0	13-8jf	Nicky Henderson	James Bowen	7
2021	<b>Fiveandtwenty</b> 4-10-10	6-4f	Donald McCain	Brian Hughes	8

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**1.43****BET365 SCOTTISH COUNTY HANDICAP HURDLE (2) 4yo+  
(Rated 0-145) £40,000 1m7f124y (3130 Metres)**

RACE 2

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

A right-handed oval track a little over a mile and a quarter in extent, almost flat with sharp bends, favouring handy types as opposed to gallopers, especially as it's a quick-draining course that tends to produce less testing ground than most tracks in midwinter. A polytrack strip was installed on the bend running away from the stands towards the end of 2012 in order to protect ground which tended to get worn and bare due to overuse. The two-mile start is on a spur on the last bend. There are eight fences (four in each straight) to a circuit and, whilst not stiff, they do claim more casualties than might be expected, a lot of the handicaps catering for low-graders.

Pace Information: **Weak**

**1 KATEIRA (49)** (D, BF) **95**  
1/3152-143 **9** 12-0 | 76.2kg



Dan Skelton

**Tristan Durrell**

Useful hurdler who made the most of good opportunity (sole rival amiss) when winning a listed mares' event at Wetherby (2m, good) in November. Creditable fourth in Grade 2 Ascot Hurdle 3 weeks later but not on her game when only third when 11/10 for a 3m Doncaster listed mares' race last month.

**2 WILLIETHEBUILDER (IRE) (21)** (D) **97**  
48-363211 **7** 11-7 | 73.0kg



Christian Williams

**Toby McCain-Mitchell (5lb/2kg)**

Not many improve for leaving Dan Skelton but this 7-y-o has done just that, winning pair of 2m Kempton handicaps in recent weeks. Raised another 6 lb but further progress can't be discounted in his current mood.

**3 GIBBS ISLAND (55)** (D) **99**  
11P8-105 **5** 11-5 | 72.1kg



Tom Lacey

**Stan Sheppard**

Victor Ludorum winner at Haydock last winter and returned to make a successful start to his handicap hurdle career at Chepstow (2m, good to firm) in October. Two lesser efforts have followed, though.

**4 WELSH CHARGER (IRE) (42)** (CD) **100**  
9/1715-046 **8** 10-10 | 68.0kg



Alastair Ralph

**Ciaran Gethings**

Winner at this meeting for the last 2 years, including this race 12 months ago. Has posted respectable efforts in top-end 2m handicaps at Cheltenham and Ascot this winter and has dipped to only 1 lb above last year's winning mark. Likely to make another bold bid in this race.

**5 WISE EAGLE (IRE) (30)** (CD) **99**  
112-6 **9** 10-8 | 67.1kg



Adam Nicol

**Joshua Thompson (5lb/2kg)**

Has tasted success here on the Flat and over hurdles but this useful sort had no apparent excuses when only sixth of 9 in 2½m course handicap on New Year's Day. Respectable seventh of 11 on AW Flat at Newcastle since.

**6 SALIGO BAY (IRE) (15)** (D) **97**  
23131110 **8** 10-7 | 66.7kg



Sam England

**Jonathan England**

Likeable type who won 5 times (1 Fla, 4 hurdle) between September and December but his run of good form came to a halt when well beaten in a valuable event at Windsor 15 days ago.

**7 AFADIL (FR) (30)** (CD, BF) **99**  
6230P-734 **7** 10-2 | 64.4kg



Paul Nicholls

**Freddie Keighley (7lb/3kg)**

Won this in 2024 and length second to Welsh Charger 12 months ago. Warmed up for this year's renewal with a creditable 5¼ lengths fourth of 9 to Star of Guiting over C&D on New Year's Day. Losing run mounting up but his strong C&D record affords him plenty of respect.

**8 CITY OF DIAMONDS (IRE) (30)** (CD) **96**  
7-351216 **6** 10-2(10-0) | 64.4kg (63.5kg)



Donald McCain

**Brian Hughes**

Improved again to make a winning handicap debut over C&D in November, driven out by 4¾ lengths from Star of Guiting. Not in the same form when behind that same rival over C&D on New Year's Day but no surprise were he to resume his progression now.

**9 STATIC (FR) (55)** **98**  
25B70-F33 **5** 10-2(10-0) | 64.4kg (63.5kg)



Donald McCain

**Charlie Maggs (5lb/2kg)**

Fairly useful sort who has finished third in 2m handicaps at Huntingdon and Kelso on his 2 completed starts this season. Brian Hughes seemingly prefers City of Diamonds.

**10 STAR OF GUITING (IRE) (30)** (CD) **97**  
2314-3U21 **5** 10-2(9-12) | 64.4kg (62.6kg)



Ewan Whillans

**Sean Quinlan**

Dual juvenile winner for Nigel Twiston-Davies last season and his strong-travelling style has proved well suited to this C&D for new yard, winning a 9-runner handicap on New Year's Day. 4 lb out of the handicap here so effectively has a 10 lb higher mark to overcome this time.

10 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**3-1 Afadil, 7-2 Williethebuilder, 15-2 Welsh Charger, 11-1 Wise Eagle, 11-1 City of Diamonds, 12-1 Star of Guiting, 14-1 Gibbs Island, 16-1 Kateira, 18-1 Saligo Bay, 25-1 Static**

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

WELSH CHARGER has shown enough in very strong races on his last 2 starts to think he's still as good as ever and is taken to come good at this meeting again. The thriving Williethebuilder rates an obvious danger, while, like the selection, Afadil has a very good record at this fixture.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

**1. WELSH CHARGER 2. WILLIETHEBUILDER 3. AFADIL**

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	<b>Welsh Charger</b> 7-11-5	14-1	Alastair Ralph	David Noonan	12
2024	<b>Afadil</b> 5-10-13	10-3f	Paul Nicholls	Freddie Gingell (5)	13
2023	<b>Collingham</b> 5-10-7	11-2	Donald McCain	Charlie Maggs (10)	10
2022	<b>Socialist Agenda</b> 6-10-5	4-1	L J Morgan	Adam Wedge	7
2021	<b>Christopher Wood</b> 6-11-9	11-4	Paul Nicholls	Angus Cheleda (7)	10

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**2.20****bet365 SCOTTISH CHAMPION CHASE HANDICAP CHASE (2)**  
**5yo+ £80,000 2½m68y (4090 Metres)**

RACE 3

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

A right-handed oval track a little over a mile and a quarter in extent, almost flat with sharp bends, favouring handy types as opposed to gallopers, especially as it's a quick-draining course that tends to produce less testing ground than most tracks in midwinter. A polytrack strip was installed on the bend running away from the stands towards the end of 2012 in order to protect ground which tended to get worn and bare due to overuse. The two-mile start is on a spur on the last bend. There are eight fences (four in each straight) to a circuit and, whilst not stiff, they do claim more casualties than might be expected, a lot of the handicaps catering for low-graders.

Pace Information: **Weak**

**1 JPR ONE (IRE) (49)** s+t **99**  
13405-332 9 12-0 | 76.2kg



Joe Tizzard

**Brendan Powell**

Winner of Haldon Gold Cup in 2024 and has worked his way back to that level this season (in cheekpieces last 2 starts), clear of the rest when runner-up in a Cheltenham handicap in December. Any rain might not be in his favour, though, as he goes up in trip.

**2 INSURRECTION (IRE) (30) (CD)** t **99**  
1/233188-3 9 10-11 | 68.5kg



Paul Nicholls

**Freddie Keighley (71b/3kg)**

Dual winner over hurdles and better form sent chasing last season, running out a wide-margin winner of C&D novice handicap at this meeting. Not in the same form next 2 starts, but after 8 months off he got back on track when third in handicap here on New Year's Day. Respected.

**3 TOMMY'S OSCAR (IRE) (30) (C)** s **97**  
4033-3554 11 10-11 | 68.5kg



Ann Hamilton

**Sean Quinlan**

Veteran who went without a win in 2024/25. However, making second start in cheekpieces he finished closer than previously this season when fourth of 9 in handicap at this C&D on New Year's Day (Insurrection ahead in third). Lurks on a dangerous mark.

**4 THE KALOOKI KID (30) (CD)** **100**  
85/2118-45 8 10-10 | 68.0kg



Nicky Richards

**Danny McMenamin**

Improved for the switch to fences last term, jumping well when recording back-to-back wins including this same race. After a further 2 months off from this season's return, respectable fifth of 9 back here on New Year's Day and could be set for a bigger effort in his title defence.

**5 TEDDY BLUE (GER) (70) (BF)** b+t **98**  
051127-17 8 10-6 | 66.2kg



Harry Derham

**Paul O'Brien**

Took well to chasing having joined current yard last season, recording back-to-back wins in early-2025. Returned in top form when landing a premier handicap at Ascot in November, though wasn't in the same form back there next time. Capable if on a going day.

**6 TRAPRAIN LAW (FR) (35)** t **98**  
437P-2421 8 10-6 | 66.2kg



Lucinda Russell &amp; Michael Scudamore

**Patrick Wadge**

Had a good first season over fences in 2023/24, winning 2 of his 5 starts. Couldn't add to his tally last term but has returned in good order, getting back to winning ways at Wetherby 5 weeks ago. Can go well again having finished third in this race last year off 3 lb higher.

**7 MOON D'ORANGE (FR) (7) (D)** b **93**  
4-7720056 8 10-2 | 64.4kg



John McConnell, Ireland

**Alex Harvey (31b/1kg)**

Winner of a premier handicap at Cheltenham around this time last year but not in the same form during the current campaign, sixth of 11 in latest renewal of the same Cheltenham race a week ago. Blinkers now the choice of headgear.

**8 BLEU D'ENFER (FR) (30) (D)** s+t **95**  
422P1-057 8 10-2(9-9) | 64.4kg (61.2kg)



Donald McCain

**Charlie Maggs (51b/2kg)**

Fitted with cheekpieces, opened chase account in handicap at Carlisle in April. Low-key start for current yard this season, but hinted at better when seventh of 9 at this C&D on New Year's Day, every chance when stumbled on landing 3 out. He's out of the weights here, though.

8 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**7-2** Insurrection, **9-2** The Kalooki Kid, **9-2** Teddy Blue, **5-1** Jpr One, **13-2** Traprain Law, **8-1** Tommy's Oscar, **22-1** Moon D'orange, **40-1** bar

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

THE KALOOKI KID wasted no time proving himself a better chaser than hurdler, looking the winner a long way out when landing this race last year, and he can build on his 2 runs this season to get back to winning ways. He is taken to get the better of Insurrection, who ran well at this C&D on return, while Traprain Law can also give another good account.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:****1. THE KALOOKI KID 2. INSURRECTION 3. TRAPRAIN LAW****WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	<b>The Kalooki Kid</b>	7-10-9	2-1f	Nicky Richards	Danny McMenamin	12
2024	<b>Corrigeen Rock</b>	7-10-11	11-2	Lucinda Russell	Derek Fox	8

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**3.00****BET365 SCOTTISH STAYERS' NOVICES' HURDLE (2) 5yo+  
£25,000 2m7f180y (4790 Metres)**

RACE 4

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

A right-handed oval track a little over a mile and a quarter in extent, almost flat with sharp bends, favouring handy types as opposed to gallopers, especially as it's a quick-draining course that tends to produce less testing ground than most tracks in midwinter. A polytrack strip was installed on the bend running away from the stands towards the end of 2012 in order to protect ground which tended to get worn and bare due to overuse. The two-mile start is on a spur on the last bend. There are eight fences (four in each straight) to a circuit and, whilst not stiff, they do claim more casualties than might be expected, a lot of the handicaps catering for low-graders.

Pace Information: **Weak**

**1 ABSOLUTELY DOYEN (IRE) (36)** **100**  
242-1111 6 11-8 | 73.5kg



Paul Nicholls

**Freddie Gingell**

Made it 4-4 for Paul Nicholls when seeing off 8 rivals in a Wincanton handicap (24.7f, good to soft) on Boxing Day, eased down at the finish and leaving the strong impression that he has more in the tank. Very much the one to beat back in novice company.

**2 LEWISHAM GROVE (IRE) (16)** **91**  
56221 5 11-5 | 72.1kg



Jennie Candlish

**Sean Quinlan**

Took another step forward when opening his account in a big-field Newcastle maiden (20.3f, good to soft) recently, quickening up well to score in decisive fashion. Clearly going the right way and should give another good account but he's up against some highly promising types in this.

**3 OUT OF THE WOODS (FR) (63)** **89**  
16-17 6 11-5 | 72.1kg



Lucinda Russell &amp; Michael Scudamore

**Patrick Wadge**

Fairly useful bumper winner who looked a good prospect when making a successful debut over hurdles in 11-runner maiden at Hexham in November. Wasn't in same form at Newcastle next time, though, and yard saddles a more appealing candidate in Sledagh.

**4 WALKS THE TALK (IRE) (42)** **95**  
324115 7 11-1 | 70.3kg



John McConnell, Ireland

**Alex Harvey**

Successful at Roscommon and Kelso on first 2 starts in this sphere before finishing fifth of 9 in a listed race at Haydock (19f, good to soft) where she repeatedly jumped right. Will be suited by this return to a right-handed track/step back up in trip and solid chance for last year's winning yard.

**5 SLEEDAGH (IRE) (29)** **96**  
2-222 6 11-0 | 69.9kg



Lucinda Russell &amp; Michael Scudamore

**Derek Fox**

£80,000 point recruit who has been runner-up on all 4 outings under Rules, most recently in a maiden hurdle at Ayr (20.4f, soft) where he wasn't knocked about. Moving back up in trip here looks a good move and he's of strong interest given his clear scope for improvement.

5 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**evens** Absolutely Doyen, **9-2** Sledagh, **5-1** Walks The Talk, **7-1** Lewisham Grove, **14-1** Out of The Woods

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

The claims of ABSOLUTELY DOYEN are pretty persuasive given his progressive profile and the fact that he's unbeaten in four starts for the Nicholls yard. Sledagh and Irish raider Walks The Talk both remain open to improvement, too, and are feared most in that order of preference. Lewisham Grove should also be on the premises but the aforementioned trio bring stronger credentials to the party.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

**1. ABSOLUTELY DOYEN 2. SLEEDAGH 3. WALKS THE TALK**

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	<b>Intense Approach</b> 6-11-8	5-4f	John McConnell	James Bowen	5
2024	<b>Ottizzini</b> 7-10-12	14-1	Stuart Crawford	Sean Quinlan	5
2023	<b>Inis Oirr</b> 6-11-0	15-2	Lucinda Russell	Derek Fox	6
2022	<b>Bardenstown Lad</b> 7-11-8	8-15f	John McConnell	B. Hayes	3
2021	<b>Threeunderthruive</b> 6-11-8	11-10f	Paul Nicholls	A. P. Heskin	8

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**3.37****BET365 HANDICAP HURDLE (Qualifier) (4) 4yo+ (Rated 0-110) £10,000 1m7f124y (3130 Metres)**

RACE 5

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

A right-handed oval track a little over a mile and a quarter in extent, almost flat with sharp bends, favouring handy types as opposed to gallopers, especially as it's a quick-draining course that tends to produce less testing ground than most tracks in midwinter. A polytrack strip was installed on the bend running away from the stands towards the end of 2012 in order to protect ground which tended to get worn and bare due to overuse. The two-mile start is on a spur on the last bend. There are eight fences (four in each straight) to a circuit and, whilst not stiff, they do claim more casualties than might be expected, a lot of the handicaps catering for low-graders.

Pace Information: **Strong**

**1 PADDYS POLICY (IRE) (33) 98**  
5314F-273 6 11-13 | 75.7kg



Donald McCain

*Charlie Maggs (5lb/2kg)*

Back on track when creditable third of 10 in handicap hurdle at Doncaster (16.6f, good) 33 days ago, faring best of those ridden prominently. Dropped 1 lb since and can make presence felt.

**2 IRISH BLAZE (IRE) (42) (D) 93**  
30/046UP-7 10 11-12 | 75.3kg



Nicky Richards

*Danny McMenamin*

Proved disappointing on final 2 starts for Cian Michael Collins in Ireland and little signs of encouragement, back from 12 months off, on debut for new yard at Haydock (15.6f) 42 days ago.

**3 CHANONRY POINT (IRE) (30) (CD) 90**  
13-219 6 11-11 | 74.8kg



Lucinda Russell &amp; Michael Scudamore

*Patrick Wadge*

Opened account at second attempt in this sphere when taking C&D maiden in November. However, finished well held on handicap debut here since and her current mark looks fairly lofty.

**4 MAGNA VICTOR (40) (CD) 98**  
6/53-41 7 11-11 | 74.8kg



Alastair Ralph

*Ciaran Gethings*

Lightly-raced for his age and posted a career best when winning 11-runner handicap hurdle over C&D (good to soft, 8/1) 40 days ago by neck from Gemini Man. 4 lb higher now but he may be capable of better yet.

**5 RAVENSCRAIG CASTLE (30) 98**  
555-91453 8 11-11 | 74.8kg



Iain Jardine

*Joshua Thompson (5lb/2kg)*

Ended lengthy losing run at Perth (16.2f) last summer and back to that sort of form when creditable third of 9 in handicap hurdle over C&D (good to soft) 30 days ago. Respected.

**6 CAPTAIN COOL (IRE) (89) 96**  
43213 6 11-5 | 72.1kg



Jennie Candlish

*Sean Quinlan*

Irish point winner who opened account over timber at Sedgefield (16.8f) in October. Couldn't build on that when third of 5 in handicap hurdle at Plumpton (20.5f, good to soft, 11/4) 89 days ago but he remains low mileage. Cheekpieces on first time.

**7 AS FAST AS WIND (IRE) (10) (D) 99**  
52-313366 6 11-3 | 71.2kg



Tristan Davidson

*Paul O'Brien*

Struck for the first time in this sphere at Kempton (16f) in October for Daisy Hitchins and made good start for new yard when close third at Sedgefield the following month. Run creditably at Catterick (19.3f) latest and return to this shorter trip may well suit. Not out of things.

**8 PLATIN MOON (FR) (18) (D) 100**  
652-4651 5 11-2 | 70.8kg



N. W. Alexander

*Bruce Lynn*

Capitalised on a falling mark when winning 9-runner handicap hurdle at Ayr (16f, heavy) 18 days ago, always holding on. 5 lb rise looks fair and he is a likely player.

**9 GEMINI MAN (IRE) (40) 98**  
72126932 8 11-2 | 70.8kg



Iain Jardine

*Brian Hughes*

Hexham winner in August who posted his best effort in this sphere when neck second of 11 to Magna Victor in handicap hurdle (9/1) over C&D (good to soft) 40 days ago. Remains feasibly treated and looks likely to be in the mix again. Cheekpieces on first time over jumps.

9 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**4-1** Platin Moon, **5-1** Magna Victor, **15-2** Gemini Man, **15-2** Paddys Policy, **10-1** As Fast As Wind, **10-1** Captain Cool, **12-1** Ravenscraig Castle, **12-1** Chanonry Point, **12-1** Irish Blaze

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

Preference is for MAGNA VICTOR, who upped his game when scoring here last month and remains with potential. Platin Moon and Gemini Man are feared most.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

**1. MAGNA VICTOR 2. PLATIN MOON 3. GEMINI MAN**

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	<b>Bashful</b> 7-11-2	7-2f	Iain Jardine	Danny McMenamin	15
2024	<b>Bashful</b> 6-10-11	3-1	Iain Jardine	Conor O'Farrell	10
2023	<b>Scots Poet</b> 7-10-13	17-2	Ewan Whillans	Craig Nichol	13
2022	<b>Smart Lass</b> 7-10-4	11-4f	Iain Jardine	Alan Doyle (7)	12
2021	<b>Breguet Boy</b> 4-11-4	6-1	Keith Dalgleish	Craig Nichol	13

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race

**4.11**

RACE 6

**EACH WAY EXTRA AT BET365 HANDICAP CHASE (Qualifier)  
(3) 5yo+ (Rated 0-135) £20,000 2m7f138y (4750  
Metres)****GBI RACING**Going: **Good to Soft (Soft in places)**

A right-handed oval track a little over a mile and a quarter in extent, almost flat with sharp bends, favouring handy types as opposed to gallopers, especially as it's a quick-draining course that tends to produce less testing ground than most tracks in midwinter. A polytrack strip was installed on the bend running away from the stands towards the end of 2012 in order to protect ground which tended to get worn and bare due to overuse. The two-mile start is on a spur on the last bend. There are eight fences (four in each straight) to a circuit and, whilst not stiff, they do claim more casualties than might be expected, a lot of the handicaps catering for low-graders.

Pace Information: **Very Weak**

**1 EMPIRE STEEL (IRE) (379) (D) 97**  
3219/43P- 12 12-0 | 76.2kg



Sandy Thomson

**Charlie Maggs (5lb/2kg)**

Made it to the racecourse just twice last season, failing to build on his creditable reappearance display when pulled up at Market Rasen last January. Absent since and this veteran tends to save his best for Kelso nowadays.

**2 INOX ALLEN (FR) (30) 97**  
34/3771-P8 8 11-6 | 72.6kg v+t



Lucinda Russell &amp; Michael Scudamore

**Patrick Wadge**

Much improved with a visor added and returned to positive tactics when a dominant winner (jumped superbly) of a Perth handicap chase last spring. However, he has completely misfired in 2 subsequent starts and now finds himself with a point to prove.

**3 REXEM (IRE) (30) 98**  
5-4753142 9 11-1 | 70.3kg s



John McConnell, Ireland

**D. A. Kidd (7lb/3kg)**

Landed small-field novices' handicap chase at Ludlow in autumn 2023. Sole subsequent success came in a Clonmel claiming hurdle in October but should add to that before long judged on his solid second back in this sphere in a Class 2 contest at this course (20.3f, good to soft) on New Year's Day.

**4 SPECIAL RATE (IRE) (40) (D) 97**  
75224-362 9 11-1 | 70.3kg t



Hugh Burns

**Brian Hughes**

Multiple winner for Philip Kirby in 2023/2024 and placed on a few occasions over fences for Lizzie Quinlan last spring. Positive start for new connections when runner-up in a C&D handicap just before Christmas but will need to raise his game if he's to go one better in this stronger race.

**5 KELCE (IRE) (36) (D) 100**  
21F21-472 8 10-11 | 68.5kg s



Neil Mulholland

**Conor O'Farrell**

Much improved switched to fences with cheekpieces applied last season, winning twice. Latest second at Aintree (25f, good) just about a career-best and hard to grumble with a 1 lb rise for that. so there are good reasons to be optimistic about his prospects here.

**6 SAMMY SMART (31) (D) 99**  
38126-021 10 10-7 | 66.7kg



T. Gibney, Ireland

**James Smith (5lb/2kg)**

Back from 7 months off with a good second in Thurles handicap chase in November. Built on that when narrowly prevailing at Punchestown (19.7f, good to soft) on New Year's Eve and while this 9 lb higher mark demands more, stepping back up in trip won't be an issue and he's unexposed as a chaser.

**7 ALWAYS BUSY (IRE) (17) 98**  
1PP-144F3 8 10-2(10-1) | 64.4kg (64.0kg)



Christian Williams

**Mr J. J. Murphy-Knight (7lb/3kg)**

Won twice by healthy margins in the first half of last year, latterly taking a 4-runner Southwell handicap (24.2f, good to soft) in May. By no means disgraced when third of 11 back from a break at Newbury but stamina is his forte and a stiffer test would be preferable.

7 DECLARED RUNNERS

**BETTING FORECAST:**

**5-2** Kelce, **10-3** Rexem, **4-1** Sammy Smart, **15-2** Special Rate, **12-1** Empire Steel, **14-1** Inox Allen, **18-1** Always Busy

**TIMEFORM VIEW:**

KELCE pulled clear of the rest when runner-up at Aintree last time and a reproduction of that would probably suffice in this contest. He may have most to fear from Irish raiders Sammy Smart and Rexem, with the former just about feared most on the back of his Punchestown success.

**TIMEFORM 1-2-3:**

**1. KELCE 2. SAMMY SMART 3. REXEM**

**WINNERS IN PREVIOUS YEARS:**

2025	<b>One More Stroke</b>	6-10-9	9-4	Donald McCain	Brian Hughes	6
2024	<b>Anglers Crag</b>	9-11-1	5-4f	Brian Ellison	Henry Brooke	9
2023	<b>Methodtothemadness</b>	9-11-6	6-1	Lucinda Russell	Derek Fox	5
2022	<b>Magna Sam</b>	8-11-7	11-10f	Sophie Leech	A. P. Heskin	4
2021	<b>Event of Sivola</b>	7-10-8	6-1	Mark Walford	Jamie Hamilton	7

**SMART STATS:**

No Smart Stats available for this race