

Yet none of this could happen without the income generated from punting, and from that perspective something that has become apparent in recent months has been the virtual demise of ante-post betting as a serious medium for betting. Late changes of plan – a recent example being the case of Vautour at Cheltenham – don't help, but with so many benefits now offered by bookmakers on the day of a big race or major meeting there seems little point in taking risks without the 'non-runner, no bet' concession.

Clients have been in touch with Rebecca about having their accounts closed or being declined for anything but tiny amounts – literally sometimes only pence!

The bookmakers now have to face competition from Betfair, which is no bad thing given the much fairer margins the exchanges offer. There is admittedly limited liquidity on the exchanges the night before, especially for minor meetings, but it is possible to have a serious bet on Betfair in the minutes before the race. The same comment applies to Betfair's ante-post markets.

Looking ahead following the Guineas meeting it won't be long before Epsom comes along, then Royal Ascot and the peak midsummer season of racing including Goodwood and York. I will be covering all those meetings through one of my services, together with the day-to-day racing through my private and public lines. You may also have noticed that Rebecca is full of ideas at the moment, so watch out for her enhancement to our services using the latest technology.

There is much to look forward to so I hope you will be joining me for the weeks ahead.

Best of luck and bye for now!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marten". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

P.s Our Royal Ascot Bulletin Book is available for £15 until 9 May (then increases to £20) Please call 01539 741 007 to order or visit www.martenjulian.com