

Marten Vilon

The Sleeper Section Marten Julian

Angelito (7yr old Tony Newcombe)

Angelito could never be described as unexposed, having run 32 times at a relatively ordinary level, yet on 16 of those occasions he has finished in the first three, winning twice. With horses trained by Tony Newcombe the game is all about getting a horse down to its mark, usually at a fairly low-grade track. Bath, for example, is a favourite venue and indeed it was at the Somerset track that Angelito won his two races, as a three-year-old back in the late summer of 2012.

Since then the horse has failed to win, but his consistency has meant that his rating has seldom moved by more than a pound or two. For example, between May 2013 and June 2015 his mark varied between a low of 75 and a high of 79. However, since then he has started to slip down the weights and despite running quite well on his most recent start at Bath at the beginning of July he is now down to a career-low mark of 64. As recently as last August he was within a neck of winning a race from 75 – an 11lb higher mark – and I am sure his trainer will have a target race in mind for him in the near future.

By the way he was withdrawn from a race at Bath recently in the morning, perhaps because his trainer feared a well-treated rival that duly won. There had been market support for him beforehand, so don't be surprised to see further interest when he is next declared to run. Five to six furlongs is his trip.

Entered on Tuesday at Salisbury (2.30)

Accidental Agent (2yr old Eve Johnson-Houghton) Included 20 July

This son of Delegator was brought into this section last week after catching my eye on his debut at Sandown, both in the paddock and the race itself.

He is one of 21 horses entered for a maiden auction stakes over 7f at Chepstow on Sunday (2.00). The marker is set by the 72-rated Bazwind but this Class 4 is the right level for Accidental Agent and I expect to see him run well.

Entered on Sunday 31 July at Chepstow (2.00)

Boy In The Bar (5yr old Ian Williams) Included 20 July

I would favour Angelito if this horse is declared to run in the same race. My advice would be to monitor the market on both horses very carefully.

Entered on Tuesday 2 August at Salisbury (2.30)

The Premier List Update Marten Julian

The following horses from the Premier List of the Dark Horses Annual have forthcoming entries.

Blue De Vega did not take up his entry at Goodwood this week. His next entries are for a Group 3 at Leopardstown on 11 August and the Group 1 Irish Champion Stakes on 10 September.

Brave Hero is entered for the 1m 0-90 Summer Cup at Thirsk on Saturday (4.10). The son of Poet's Voice has looked temperamental on his two starts this season, both at Newmarket, but he has since been gelded and has dropped 3lb, from a mark of 90 to 87. Respect his chance if there is market support, as connections would not have been willing to carry on with him unless they felt the ability was still there.

Earring has entries for a Group 3 at Cork next Tuesday, 2 August, and the Yorkshire Oaks just over a fortnight later on 18 August. She also has entries for a Group 3 at the Curragh on 28 August and the St Leger at Doncaster. The race at Cork could be the most suitable target for her at this stage.

Estidraak is entered for the 7f 86-105 a Goodwood on Saturday (4.55). The son of Iffraaj raced keenly when last of 10 behind Lumiere in a Listed contest on his seasonal return at Newmarket's July Meeting. He showed last season that he is better than that so let's give him another chance to redeem himself. Market strength would be encouraging.

Heatstroke is entered for the 71-90 Qatar Apprentice Stakes at Goodwood on Saturday (6.00). The lightly-raced four-year-old was eye-catching on his belated return to action at Sandown in May but then ran less well next time at Yarmouth. Charlie Hills has his horses in good form and I would like to stay with this one for the time being. He has dropped 1lb, from 87 to 86.

Prize Money ran creditably in the Gordon Stakes without suggesting that he is on the upward curve. He may prove more effective on softer ground in the autumn.

Rainbow Pride is declared for Bath on Friday (6.35) and entered for two races on Monday, at Kempton (4.30) and Carlisle (8.45). Sir Mark Prescott will go through the races before deciding on which offers the horse the best chance of winning. I would be very hopeful that he can return to winning ways.

Top Beak is declared to run in the extended of handicap at Goodwood on Thursday (2.00). The horse has disappointed in two races at a higher level than this, but this represents a drop in grade and I will be hoping to see a glimmer of form from him. His trainer Hughie Morrison says this race will be needed and he could be one for the autumn.

Ulysses won the Gordon Stakes at Goodwood on Wednesday in the manner of a progressive colt. Buffeted around in the Derby, where the soft ground did not play to his strengths, he enjoyed the conditions far more here and is one to stay with. I expect him to prove just as effective at a mile and a quarter as this mile and a half.

The Postscript Update

Marten Julian

The following horses from the Postscript service have forthcoming entries.

Ballydoyle has an entry for the Nassau Stakes on Saturday at Goodwood (3.10). At the time of writing stable-companion Minding heads the market, but Ballydoyle is extremely tough and I confidently expect a top race to come her way. We have not yet seen the best of her this season.

Barwick, who has become increasingly temperamental on the Flat, is entered for his first hurdle at the age of eight on Friday at Bangor (3.20). It will be interesting to see how he gets on.

Churchill did all that was required when beating Alexios Komnenos at Leopardstown last week. He is proving a slow learner, but there is no doubting his resolution and his next race will probably be the Futurity Stakes at the Curragh on 21 August. He is probably Aidan O'Brien's leading 2,000 Guineas hope at the moment. I do not expect him to stay the Derby trip.

Folkswood ran his race at Ascot on Saturday but looks in the grip of the handicapper without being quite good enough for Pattern races. There are middle-distance winners in his family so he may be worth stretching to a trip beyond a mile.

Kings Fete, who was so unlucky when stopped in his run in the Duke of Edinburgh Stakes at Royal Ascot, is entered for the Group 3 Glorious Stakes at Goodwood on Friday (2.00). Bookmakers will tell you that over the years they have made a good living by laying apparently unlucky horses, but Kings Fete ran well in the St Leger at three so it's not as if he has something to prove. I expect him to go well.

Manson is removed from the list following his disappointing display last weekend at Ascot.

Mehmas runs in the Group 2 Richmond Stakes at Goodwood on Thursday (2.35).

Paris Protocol is entered for Goodwood on Saturday (2.35). I want us to stay with this horse as I

believe we have not yet seen the best of him. He could be worth a try over 1m 6f at some point as he is bred to stay well.

Poet's Word is entered for Goodwood on Friday (5.30). I rate him rather better than we saw at Epsom last time, where the hustle and bustle on the soft ground may not have suited him. He has the profile we have come to associate with horses trained by Sir Michael Stoute.

Queen's Trust is entered for the Nassau Stakes at Goodwood on Saturday (3.10). Sir Michael Stoute's filly caught the eye with a steady late finish in the Ribblesdale Stakes and has the potential to earn black type at some point. She is rated 15lb behind Minding but has the scope to improve. Keep her on your side as she would not be in this line-up unless her trainer deemed her capable of a decent show.

Stamp Hill is entered for the 7f 86-105 handicap at Goodwood on Saturday (4.55). He has been raised 4lb, from 86 to 90, following his gutsy effort when a close second at Epsom.

The Ante-Post Agenda Marten Julian

I have nothing to suggest for this section at the present time.

Under The Radar Marten Julian

Something that affects everyone who backs horses is the losing run.

I am going to write at greater length about this for the Perspective feature on my website over the next few days, but I have never met anyone in the industry who is not affected by it.

In the case of trainers their horses may simply be out of sorts or unfit, but even they will sometimes be heard complaining that they have had a 'run of seconds.' Yet with punters, there are sometimes hundreds of horses a day to choose from.

I am not a tipster, and have never considered myself to be one. I suppose that could be construed as something of a 'cop out' – a reluctance to make a commitment and all that sort of thing – but it's not the case with me. Races are far too complex for them to be summed up with just a name, time and race-meeting. There is so much more to it than that and, after all, we are dealing with flesh and blood – as Sheikh Mohammed often says to his team.

Having said that, the success of my business does depend to a large extent on results even though my staff work hard to advise any potential client that they are not enrolling on a tipping service.

Anyway, let's hope my run of ill-fortune soon comes to an end. The key is to keep your head down and follow the principles that have served you well.

The Clock Watcher Marten Julian

Absolutely no prizes for originality here, but the time **Fair Eva** clocked when powering to a four-lengths' victory in last week's Group 3 Princess Margaret Stakes was truly sensational.

Having created such a strong visual impression on her Haydock debut, we needed confirmation that she could be a little bit special in this better grade of race. Mind you, the Haydock form had worked out really well, with the second winning a Listed and then a close third in a Group 2 at Newmarket and the third winning her next two starts.

Fair Eva came up against a strong field at Ascot, each one a winner apart from Aidan O'Brien's useful maiden How. Always travelling well, she took the lead a furlong from home before surging away in the manner of a filly crying out for further. Her time of 1m 12.54secs was faster than standard by 0.06secs and just 0.08secs outside the two-year-old track record of 1m 12.46 set by Henrythenavigator in the 2007 Coventry Stakes.

Fair Eva is bred to stay a mile. The most impressive of Frankel's progeny to race so far, she is a half-sister to 1m winner Hakka out of African Rose, winner of a 6f Group 1 from a family of milers.

The Moyglare Stakes looks her next race with the 1,000 Guineas the obvious target in the spring. The one concern would be soft ground, but trainer Roger Charlton says she is likely to avoid it. Current odds of 5/1 for the 1,000 Guineas may seem skinny so far ahead of the race – and things can always go wrong, of course – but if I were a bookmaker I would not want to lay too much of her at that price. The clock seldom lies.

Jacbequick ran well at Beverley without quite having the run of things. He expended too much energy by pulling, leaving himself little in reserve for the closing stages over this extended mile. He still battled on well to the line but has to run from a 2lb higher mark – 90 from 88 – next time. Having said that he is admirably consistent and I want to stay with him.

The Weekend Action Marten Julian

Andrew Balding has a good record with progressive three-year-old fillies, especially sprinters, and I expect **Dancing Star** to go close in either the Stewards' Cup (3.45) or the consolation race (2.00) at Goodwood on Saturday.

The daughter of Aqlaam won the second of her three starts at two and then this season has progressed from a mark of 75 at Salisbury to 80 here at Goodwood and then last time out beating Priceless from a mark of 96 at Newmarket. She runs here from that mark with a 6lb penalty, leaving her 1lb better off than her new mark (107).

Not many horses of this type improve by two stone in the first half of the season, but this filly has the courage to match her ability. Her speed figures have steadily improved and it won't be long before she is earning black type.

I am sure Ian Carnaby, who knows far more about sprint racing than me, has something to say about the others but Dancing Star has much to commend her whatever race she tackles.

The Nassau Stakes looks set to go to Coolmore (3.10 Saturday). Minding is justifiably odds-on to win, but there are some interesting fillies up against her.

Stable-companion Ballydoyle is very game and far better than she looked three weeks ago at Belmont, where she finished last of 13. Alice Springs showed she was progressive at Newmarket and is rated just 5lb behind Minding. The one to note, perhaps more for the rest of the season, is Queen's Trust. The daughter of Dansili was running on over a mile and a half in the Ribblesdale so this trip, especially round here, may be on the sharp side. She is, though, a potential black type performer and I expect her to show up well.

On Friday **Kings Fete** will be trying to atone for his hugely unfortunate run in the Duke of Edinburgh Stakes at Royal Ascot (2.00). He would definitely have won there had Ryan Moore switched left instead of right inside the final furlong. Not disgraced in the 2014 St Leger behind Kingston Hill, this is a nice horse with Group 1 potential.

From an exposed horse to a thoroughly unexposed one, let's keep an eye on **El Vid** when he appears in the extended 1m 2f maiden at Doncaster on Saturday (2.55). Luca Cumani has not really swung into gear yet, but this son of Pivotal would have run by now but for sustaining an injury in February. He has always worked like a nice colt and is one to keep in mind for the back-end campaign.

Looking ahead to early next week keep a close eye on Par Three.

Tony Carroll handles moderate handicappers very well, usually collecting with them when they drop to their winning mark. Par Three won four times in 2015, once in Jersey, but he is best at 1m 6f or two miles and his three runs this season have been over an inadequate mile and a quarter.

I note that he has entries next Tuesday at Salisbury (4.30) and Chelmsford (8.50) over 1m 6f and two miles. There may be other opportunities for him through the week, but now back to a mark of 58 and over his correct trip I am expecting a more positive display.

Kings Fete (2.00 Goodwood Friday)

Dancing Star (2.00 or 3.45 Goodwood Saturday)

El Vid (2.55 Doncaster Saturday)

Par Three (4.30 Salisbury or 8.50 Chelmsford Tuesday)

The Weekend Selections Retrospective Marten Julian

Although disappointed that **Kruger Park** didn't make a winning debut at Pontefract on Sunday I thought he ran with great promise for the future.

The son of Requinto looked the part beforehand, albeit a little chubby around the girth, and after missing a beat at the start he travelled well and stayed on steadily to the line to be beaten just over two lengths.

Everything about his performance suggested he was a winner in waiting so let's stay with him as I know he is rated more than useful.

The gamble on Highland Reel in the King George and Queen Elizabeth Stakes caught me out. I saw the money come through for him on Friday and the momentum was maintained right up to the off. When you get support to this degree for a Ballydoyle horse – especially to this extent – the money is seldom misplaced.

We saw the same thing happen with Churchill before the Chesham Stakes at Royal Ascot and Alice Springs, who was backed from about 7/1 to 5/2 before winning the Falmouth Stakes. Also, I reckon connections knew on Saturday that Highland Reel would enjoy an uncontested lead and also that the faster ground would be in his favour.

I was actually quite pleased with the way **Dartmouth** ran, although he was comfortably beaten at the finish. He was doing his best work in the last furlong of the race, as befits a horse that carries an entry for the Irish St Leger. It cannot be too long before we see him stepped up in trip.

I would attribute **Dutch Destiny's** disappointing performance to the fast ground. There was always a chance that the daughter of Dutch Art could struggle with the going, with both her wins having come on soft ground. She actually travelled like a good horse for much of the trip and I want us to keep her on our side. Expect to see her back in the winning vein on the softer ground this autumn.

By contrast we need to drop **Manson** for the time being. The son of Equiano has not progressed from his victory at Sandown in May and I didn't like the way he dropped out so tamely here. Folkswood ran well to finish third but looks as if the handicapper has a hold on him. The race was won by Mustashry, who had found the soft ground against him in the Britannia but had worked very well with Dartmouth in his final gallop before coming here. I was annoyed that I didn't mention him.

Dutch Destiny, Kruger Park

The Weekend News

Ian Carnaby

I was a little disappointed when Richard Fahey's Right Touch was taken out of the International Handicap at Ascot last Saturday. One has to be careful with ante-post prices, of course, and it was noticeable that Coral were holding up some 16/1 whereas other firms were a few points shorter. There is no telling when the decision not to run was taken but if Coral had their doubts (for whatever reason) they were in a handy position.

Anyway, it's all in the past and Fahey now has the option of letting the six-year-old go in the Qatar Stewards' Cup at Goodwood on Saturday. I think Right Touch is more of a seven-furlong horse than a six-furlong one and he may find everything happening a shade too quickly for him. For that reason, I prefer stable-companion Growl, who looked very good over the shorter trip before staying on into fourth in the Bunbury Cup at Newmarket.

After a long spell when he seemed to be fading out of contention, Dandy Nicholls has at least two sprinters which are doing him proud at present. Kimberella won again at York last weekend and I believe the hugely progressive **Orion's Bow** will take a great deal of beating in the annual cavalry charge on the Sussex Downs.

Orion's Bow won the Scottish version at Hamilton quite easily last time and distances in excess of three lengths in top sprint handicaps always make you sit up and take notice. A 6lb higher mark is the worry, of course, but it could just be that Orion's Bow is a conditions horse running in a handicap and I think, whatever else you back at a handier price, you should save on him.

The likes of Toofi and Clear Spring will give it their best shot at this particular venue, but the one I'd save a few coins for at a massive price is **Poyle Vinnie**, whose efforts in smaller fields can be ignored because he must have a flat-out gallop in a multi-runner contest. Needless to say, it is advisable to shop around and find a bookmaker paying out on the first five each-way.

As I have mentioned recently, Godolphin have a new approach these days and often have two or three runners in top handicaps. Picking the right one is the devil's own job and trying to decide which is the 'selected' of the two - or three - is not always down to which jockey wears the royal blue cap.

A few years ago you wouldn't have found a Godolphin runner in the Stewards' Sprint Stakes, the 'consolation' race which opens Saturday's card. However, Saeed Bin Suroor has a couple of possibles and the one that interests me is **Kickboxer**, one of the very few purchases from an outside yard - he was with Mick Channon before - not to have shown to advantage so far. I always thought Kickboxer was a talented sprinter for Mick but he ran often enough and lost his way to a degree. Bin Suroor has been patient with him and, whatever his fate this weekend, I think the horse has a decent handicap in him.

I formed the impression at York the other day that Sir Mark Prsecott's **Marsha** could go all the way to the top in the sprint division. If that is to be the case, she will nee to take advantage of all the allowances as a three-year-old filly in Friday's Group 2 King George Stakes. She will appreciate fast ground and does not want rain, so hold off until close to post time.

Jodie's Jottings Jodie Standing

There are plenty of eyes on Frankel's offspring when they go to the races and rightly so with Fair Eva gaining the first Group success for the sire on Saturday.

There is also plenty to like about the Mark Johnston-trained **Frankuus**. Everything about the colt's style of running is workmanlike but I believe he has not yet had conditions to suit.

On each of his three starts over 7f he is only finding his stride as he hits the line. His debut at Haydock, where he won by one and a quarter lengths, was not impressive to the eye but he was in command at the finish, whilst his fifth in the Chesham and the third-placed run on Saturday at Ascot were more or less identical. He is not a horse with a turn of foot but he lengthens and is strongest at the line.

Out of a Linamix mare and closely related to performers who act beyond a mile, he is a horse more for the future and there are plenty of reasons to believe we have not seen the best of this colt. He will be of considerable interest once stepped up in trip.

It is only July but I have to tell you about a possible exciting prospect to keep an eye on for the rest of the summer and upcoming jumps season.

Nick Williams' debutant **Diable De Sivola** was a standout performer on a quiet Sunday afternoon at Uttoxeter and is well worthy of a mention. The three=year-old had apparently been working well at home and the team were hopeful of a big run but he was seemingly unbacked and won at odds of 7/1. Lizzie Kelly rode the gelding to perfection, educating him for much of the race at the rear before shaking him up and producing him to lead at the final flight. A quick flick of the whip and victory was sealed in comfortable style.

Admittedly he did not beat much and I am not saying he is a world-beater but he is bred for the job and has the size and scope to progress far beyond what he showed here.

It was interesting to hear Dan Skelton on his Stable Tour feature on At The Races over the weekend talking about how difficult it is in this day and age to buy horses - a statement which sounds ludicrous given the amount of horses there are on offer. In terms of quality, however, it is a competitive battle field with the sales ring more crowded than ever with everyone wanting to buy a horse with a decent pedigree. The point-to-point field, which I pay particular attention to, is the strongest it has been with a maiden winner fetching anything up to £300,000.

I am currently delving into all the sales and researching the Irish point-to-points for my section in the Dark Horses Jumps Annual and I look forward to sharing some of my findings with you in the coming weeks.

Finally, **Rex Imperator** ran very well to finish third at Goodwood on Wednesday. Two things you cannot do at Goodwood are miss the break and then try for a run up the inside, and he did both. The seven-year-old was awash with sweat beforehand and may be becoming a little canny with the passing of years.

Across The Water Cathryn Fry

I would like to open my first article for Marten Julian with a dedication to John Thomas (JT) McNamara who has sadly passed away at the age of 41, three years after being paralysed in a fall at the Cheltenham Festival. In facing his disabilities and the endless rehabilitation that followed, JT showed the courage of a lion.

There were many stand-out moments in JT's career. Many people are quite rightly remembering his handling of the mercurial Rith Dubh in the National Hunt Chase as the highlight.

All of us at Cheltenham in March 2002 marvelled at a sublime ride which you can never tire of replaying. Knowing that he can't show Rith Dubh the stick, JT holds on to the horse for as long as possible before coaxing him to put his head slightly in front of Timbera. Rith Dubh starts to have his own ideas and it looks for all money that Timbera and Davy Russell will go by but JT is coolness personified and continues to coax with hands and heels and the pair hold on to cross the line. It was one of the greatest rides you will ever see.

Like everyone else in racing, I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to JT's family and friends. May he rest in peace.

I've been keeping a close eye on the action across the water at the Galway Festival. In the opening contest on Monday, Muthaza obliged at the prohibitive odds of 1/6 in a novice hurdle. Reports suggest that she will be prepared for the Mares' Novices Hurdle at the 2017 Cheltenham Festival.

However, another Mullins inmate is of interest to me in that race - Rich Ricci's Let's Dance. The filly really caught my eye as a juvenile last season, mostly when chasing home the wonder woman that is Apple's Jade at Punchestown. As we know, it's futile to try to guess where any horse from Closutton will line up but it would be prudent to keep them both onside.

Monday's highlight was the QR Handicap. The eye-catcher for me there was Renneti who finished fourth, around six lengths off the leader. He seems to be settling a lot better these days. On this latest showing I hope to see him once again line up in the Cesarewitch in which he finished fourth last year, beaten less than two lengths. If he does travel to Newmarket in the autumn, he's a bet for me.

At the risk of this article sounding like an advert for Willie Mullins, I thought there were lots of positives to take from the chasing debut of Briar Hill. Yes, he was beaten by 66/1 shot Talk The Lingo but the will that seemed to be lacking since his dreadful fall at Cheltenham in 2014 looked to be back. He was keen enough in the early stages and I would think he's going to need 2m5f plus. If he goes the right way, one would imagine the 2017 JLT Novices Chase would be ideal for him.

Irish Eyes

William Reilly

The strangest story of last week was trainer Tony Martin winning his appeal against the ban he received over the running of Pyromaniac at Killarney on July 12th, but still finding the horse banned because the authorities ruled that he should have been aware of and tended to the horse's troublesome teeth in the build-up to the race.

In response, Tony appealed successfully to Ireland's High Court for a judicial review, thereby enabling Pyromaniac to run in the Galway Hurdle on Thursday (July 28th).

There is a lot more to be heard from this story, one that follows relatively hot on the heels of the Noble Emperor "non-trier" case (Limerick April 3rd; a ban Tony subsequently saw overturned on appeal).

In both Britain and Ireland, recent rulings by disciplinary panels have come under an unflattering spotlight. In Ireland, the general aim seems to be to emphasise the integrity of the sport in order to support the saleability of picture and data rights - the goose with the golden eggs - to existing and emerging markets.

Another matter occupying thought is the impact that Ireland's three leading jumping owners are having on the wider racing picture. Figures indicate that in the last 18 months or so Gigginstown House Stud, JP McManus and Rich and Susannah Ricci have won around one-third of all jumping prize-money in Ireland.

There is no doubt that they are all contributing to an amazing era of quality racing and the public are getting to see some outstanding horses. It seems inevitable, though, that there will be an impact upon the attractiveness of racehorse ownership for others in general going forward.

Whilst on this theme, those owners won £1.87 million of the £4.115 million in prize-money on offer at the 2016 Cheltenham Festival. Gigginstown, of course, also won the Aintree Grand National. As someone recently jokingly remarked, maybe the BHA will implement an approved owner policy to go with racing's approved betting partner position currently sending waves of discord through the industry!

Shortly before I wrote this piece, Willie Mullins and Gordon Elliott were busy watching their horses fill the first six positions in the Galway Plate, the winner being owned by Gigginstown. It was an exciting race, though, as was the Sussex Stakes earlier the same day.

Back to the flat and this season's Coventry Stakes winner Caravaggio – as Timeform ratings suggest – is head and shoulders the best two-year-old we have seen this season and he looks set to run at The Curragh on August 7^{th} in the Keeneland Phoenix Stakes. He's a very exciting prospect.

His trainer, Aidan O'Brien, continued on his winning ways by recently landing British Group 1 races with Highland Reel in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes and The Gurkha in the aforementioned Qatar Sussex Stakes. He currently leads this season's flat trainers' championships in both Britain and Ireland.

Whether or not he lands what would be a fifth British title, there seems little doubt that he will continue to set records that will prove hard to beat in the years ahead.

By the way, Galway revealed that Briar Hill now has an artificial sinus owing to damage caused at the 2014 Cheltenham Festival. He jumped well in the main at Galway but will need a longer trip to be seen to best effect.



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