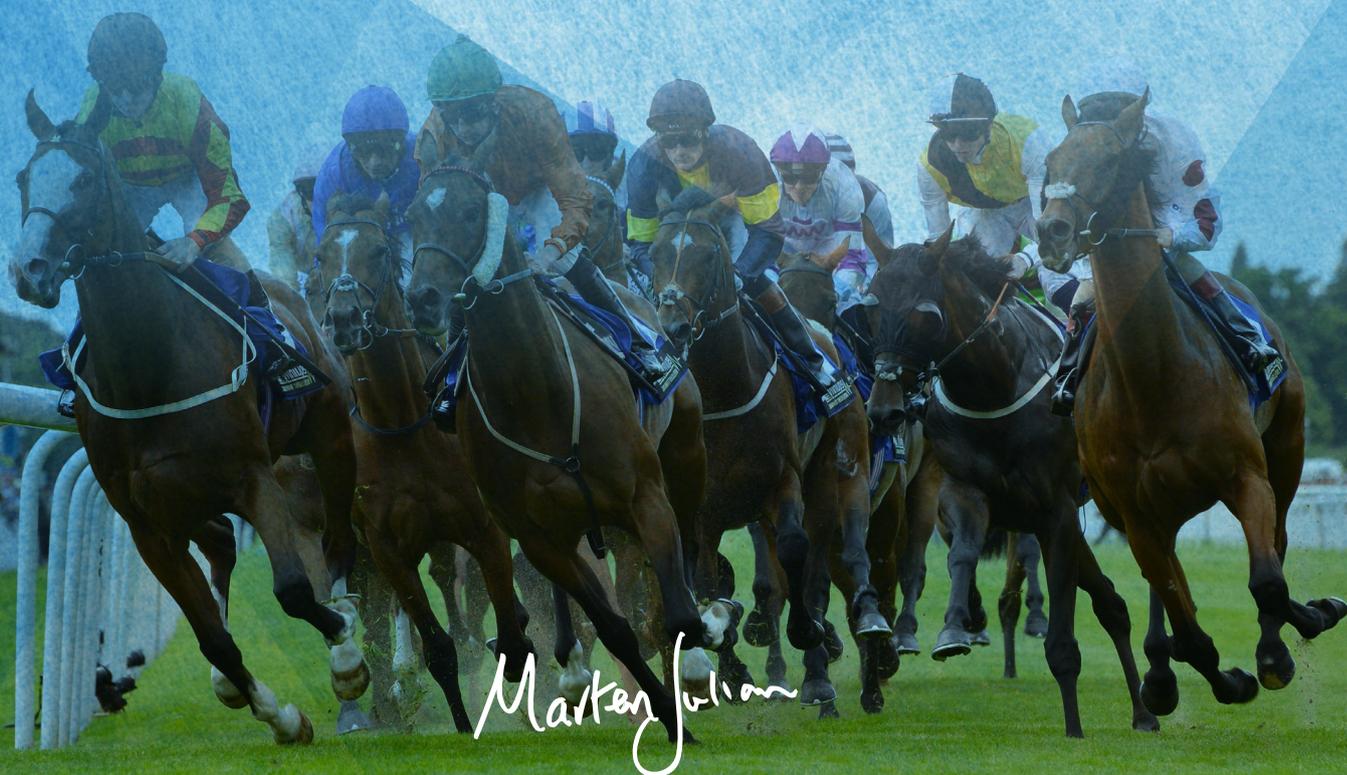


the
Weekend
card



Marken Julian

The Sleeper Section

Marten Julian

Horses that have been added to the Sleeper Section this week are highlighted in blue.

Art Du Val (2yr Bay Colt) WON 4/5

Charlie Appleby's son of No Nay Never is a half-brother to three winners in France at trips up to a mile and a half. There is plenty of stamina on the bottom line as the dam, a daughter of Rainbow Quest, won over an extended 1m 6f and is related to a French Oaks and Prix Vermeille winner.

This was evident from the manner of his success over seven furlongs at Sandown, when he took a while to find his stride before powering away to beat Leroy Leroy by one and three-quarter lengths.

The colt ran in the 1m Listed Prix Isonomy at Deauville today and finished second to Duke Of Hazard, beaten on merit. He will do better over further next season but on this evidence is short of top class. He is removed from the list.

Chatez (7yr Bay Gelding) L 12/1, L 10/1

Alan King's exposed dual-purpose performer caught the eye in a major way on his return from a 269-day break at Ayr. Starting at 12/1, after a little market support, he was held up in arrears before making steady headway to finish a never-nearer fourth, passing the line just under three lengths behind the winner.

He again ran better than his final placing suggests when 10th of 16 to Just Hiss in a 1m 0-100 at York having been baulked approaching the final furlong. His mark has been dropped 2lb, from 98 to 96, and he is entered for a 1m 2f 0-105 at *Newbury on Saturday (4.30)* and a 1m 0-105 at *Leicester on Monday (3.05)*. Of the two the race at Newbury looks the more appropriate, over the longer trip and on good to soft ground.

Edgewood (2yr Bay Colt) 2nd 7/2

Edgewood ran a strange sort of race last time at Redcar. Strong in the market beforehand, he was keen in the first part of the race and then looked held a quarter of a mile from home, only to stay on in the closing stages and get caught close home by the newcomer Ride The Monkey.

Frank Bridge (5yr Bay Gelding) L 66/1, L 12/1

Frank Bridge had his first run for Rod Millman at Goodwood, well away and ridden prominently until tiring in the final quarter mile. His mark dropped as a result by 3lb from 82 to 79, which is a stone below his peak mark of 93 in August, 2017.

The five-year-old has been declared for a 7f 0-85 handicap at *Newbury on Friday (4.00)*. He will be a good price for this but will need luck in running given the size of the field back down in trip. Have an each-way interest in him.

Great Midge (3yr Bay Gelding)

This son of Kyllachy, out of a Royal Applause mare, is very speedily bred and would have gone close to winning at Kempton on his handicap debut had he not been drawn on the wide outside and then got stopped in his run two furlongs from home. To his great credit he picked up very well in the closing stages to finish fourth, beaten close home for third. Great Midge has not been raised from his mark of 75 following this encouraging effort and he would not be inconvenienced by a drop back to five furlongs.

Kadar (2yr Bay Colt) WON 5/2

Karl Burke's son of Scat Daddy did everything expected of him when winning on his racecourse debut at Haydock.

He has been left in the Group 1 Vertem Futurity Stakes at *Doncaster on Saturday (4.05)*, where he could come up against a strong challenge Aidan O'Brien and John Gosden. This will be a proper test for him but he won't be disgraced.

Socru (2yr Bay Colt) 2nd 8/1, L 16/1

There was no market confidence behind Socru at Pontefract last time but he still shaped quite well, ridden positively and keeping on steadily at the finish. As expected he has dropped a couple of pounds, from 70 to 68, and he has an entry for a 7f 0-70 nursery at *Leicester on Monday (1.20)*. Expect an improved performance.

Victory Day (2yr Bay Colt) L 5/1

This son of Bated Breath, who cost £270,000 as a yearling, is a half-brother to useful 6f to 8f performance Homage and other winners over seven furlongs to 1m 5f. His dam, a daughter of Night Shift, won as a two-year-old. Trained by William Haggas, he was quietly backed before his debut at Yarmouth and shaped well to finish fifth, never nearer than at the finish. He should go close next time out.

Westbrook Bertie (3yr Bay Gelding) L 20/1, L 66/1

Westbrook Bertie had no chance on the quick ground at Leicester last time but after finishing last of 11, beaten 22 lengths, he has dropped 3lb from 78 to 75. This leaves him back on the mark off which he won in heavy ground at Salisbury on April and now, with a little more ground in his favour, we need to watch out for him. Given his latest form he will be at a decent price when he appears.

Selections

Frank Bridge (4.00 Newbury Friday), Kadar (4.05 Doncaster Saturday), Chatez (4.30 Newbury Saturday and 3.05 Leicester Monday), Socru (1.20 Leicester Monday)

The Premier List Update – Flat Marten Julian

Here are the Premier List horses from the 2018 Dark Horses Flat Annual. The latest Dark Horses Jumps Guide is published this week and the new Premier List selections will appear here in a fortnight.

Bombyx, Crossed Baton, Elarqam, Gardens Of Babylon, Glendevon, Herculean, Knight To Behold, Lady Of Shalott, Matchmaking, Sovereign Duke, Stephenson's Rocket, Tabdeed, Thrave, Veracious

Bombyx: Bombyx was beaten on merit in an extended 1m 3f handicap at Yarmouth last time out off 98. He may do better next year.

Crossed Baton: Ran at Deauville in the same race as Knight To Behold but after chasing the leader he dropped away tamely. This was a regressive step and it remains to be seen what John Gosden has in mind for him now.

Elarqam: Ran well to finish fourth in the 2,000 Guineas but disappointed connections when sixth to Romanised in the Irish 2,000 Guineas. He ran creditably in a Group 2 at York, possibly

not staying the extended mile and a quarter in the rain-softened ground, but was disappointing last time in a 1m Listed race at Salisbury. He has been taken out of his early-closing races and it will be interesting to learn if he is going to stay in training next year.

Gardens Of Babylon: I asked Aidan O'Brien about this colt at Newmarket and he told me that he will be in the Horses In Training Sale at Newmarket. He said the colt had a problem behind but is back cantering and may have a future as a dual-purpose performer.

Glendevon: This son of Scat Daddy ran a respectable race to chase home Archetype at Chelmsford last time. He pulled hard and carried his head high as usual but I expect he will be kept going on the all-weather this winter. He is not one of my better picks for the section.

Herculean: Made quite hard work of winning a 1m 2f novice stakes at Pontefract last time but that was a step in the right direction without suggesting he is heading for the big time. A mark of 90 is about right. He has been entered for races at *Doncaster (4.45 Friday)* and *Newbury (4.30 Saturday)*. Keep an eye on him with a view to next season.

Knight To Behold: Harry Dunlop's son of Sea The Stars ran quite well in the Group 2 Prix Dollar at Longchamp given that the ground was probably too quick for him. I imagine he may be kept in training next year.

Lady Of Shalott: Shaped a little better at Newmarket, travelling well until weakening a quarter of a mile from home. She has been dropped 3lb, from 90 to 87, and there may be another opportunity for her this autumn but overall she has been disappointing.

Matchmaking: Matchmaking has been put away for next season.

Sovereign Duke: Ran a fair sort of race in the Queen's Vase without convincing that he stayed the trip. May be between a rock and a hard place on his new mark of 95.

Stephensons Rocket: Doesn't help his cause by racing keenly but settled better for Jamie Spencer in the Hampton Court Stakes at Royal Ascot, finishing just over eight lengths behind the winner. His mark has dropped from 101 to 99. He looks Listed class at best and may be another one for next season.

Tabdeed: Duly appreciated the drop in grade to win a Class 2 6f 0-105 handicap at Ascot in the style of a Group-class performer. He was always travelling well on the bridle but had nowhere to go two furlongs out until finding an instant change of gear when a gap appeared. A 7lb rise, from 96 to 103, still leaves him well treated. He could be top class next season.

Veracious: Found the Group 1 Sun Chariot Stakes beyond her last time. There is a good chance she will be kept in training next season when she may improve sufficiently to win at that level.

Selection

Herculean (4.45 Doncaster Friday or 4.30 Newbury Saturday)

The Ante-Post Agenda

Marten Julian

Selections

Sangarius WIN (advised at 33/1 for the 2,000 Guineas)

Quorto E/W (advised at 8/1 for the 2,000 Guineas)

Quorto E/W (advised at 16/1 for the Derby)

Under The Radar

Marten Julian

Duke Of Alba ran a respectable race to finish third to Mankind in a 1m 0-65 at Chelmsford last week. He has been dropped 3lb, from 66 to 63, and may be able to run again from that mark before his trip to the Newmarket Sales.

Sugar Plum Fairy did us a big favour when she won at Bath but despite running in a similar manner last week at Brighton she never looked likely to make up the ground at the finish. I want to keep her on our side, possibly for something on the all-weather surface in the next few weeks.

Tedham is added to this section following his run in a fair 2m 1f novices' hurdle last week at Carlisle.

Word reached me before his racecourse debut in a Warwick bumper last season that he was quite well regarded and Jonjo O'Neill sent him north for a competitive 2m 1f novices' hurdle at Carlisle last week. He was extremely weak in the market in the 15 minutes before the off and ran accordingly, travelling well until tiring from the second last.

This was his hurdling debut so I'm not sure whether he will be placed to win a similar event or be prepared for handicaps. Either way I want us to be with him.

There are no immediate entries for **Ross Raith Rover**, **Bard Of Brittany**, **Bouclier** and **Just Fab**.

The Weekend Action

Marten Julian

Canton Queen looks interesting dropped to six furlongs in the Listed Doncaster Stakes on *Saturday (1.45)*.

The daughter of Shamardal won her maiden over seven furlongs but she has loads of pace and I expect her prove more effective at this shorter trip.

Zuba did not disgrace himself last time at Goodwood, up there just off the pace until tiring in the soft ground. The step up to a mile and a quarter on the artificial surface at Chelmsford may see him in a better light (*4.45 Chelmsford Monday*).

Keep an eye on **Bang On** if he makes his hurdling debut over the next few days. I know that Jeremy Scott rates the five-year-old very highly having run well in three bumpers last season. He has entries for *Aintree on Sunday (12.40)* and *Chepstow on Tuesday (2.20)*.

Finally I want us to stay with **Evanescent** despite his regressive profile (*4.00 Redcar Monday* and *4.10 Catterick Tuesday*). The nine-year-old is now rated on 48 – 38lb below his peak mark of 86 three years ago.

Selections

Bang On (12.40 Aintree Sunday and 2.20 Chepstow Tuesday), Canton Queen (1.45 Doncaster Saturday), Evanescent (4.00 Redcar Monday and 4.10 Catterick Tuesday), Zuba (4.45 Chelmsford Monday)

The Weekend Selections Retrospective

Marten Julian

This piece is devoted to retrospective analysis of my selections from last week. If any of the noted horses have entries over the next few days my views will appear elsewhere.

Saluti shaped better than on his previous two starts when he ran a one-length fourth of 10 to Hombre Casado in a 7f 0-95 at Kempton earlier this week. That was more like the form he

showed when catching my eye from a bad draw at Goodwood, but the fact is he is not an easy horse to win with and may require a drop of a few pounds in the handicap.

I see that he is entered for the Horses In Training Sales, so it will be interesting to see who buys him. A move to a smaller yard could be rekindle his spirit as I am sure he retains a fair amount of ability.

Pilaster found herself a little short of room at a critical stage of last Saturday's Fillies & Mares Stakes. She possibly could have finished a few lengths closer had she not been stopped in her momentum but she would not have reached the frame. I think she has more to offer and so hope to see her retained in training next season.

I was frustrated by the run of **Lord Glitters** in the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes. It was a good effort to finish two and three-quarter lengths behind Roaring Lion but for some reason he hit a flat-spot when Jamie switched him to challenge before staying on inside the final furlong.

I formed the impression he had something still left to give, although it's worth remembering that he won twice over a mile and a quarter when he was trained in France and a step back up in trip could pay dividends.

I remain convinced that Lord Glitters can win a Group 1 race, notably when he faces a stiff pace on easy ground. He will be high on my list of horses to follow next season.

Crystal Ocean was put firmly in his place by a back-to-form Cracksman in the Champion Stakes. The four-year-old probably needs further than a mile and a quarter at this level and I expect he will be kept in training next season. The official assessor has dropped his BHA rating from 129 to 126 following the weekend's race.

Venture was quietly backed to win a warm novice stakes at Kempton on Tuesday but he could run on only at one pace to finish fourth, beaten three and three-quarter lengths by Fox Champion. Handicaps will be his thing next season.

Prince Eiji was fifth of six in a 1m Listed race at Deauville earlier today (Wednesday). He is useful but exposed and is now off the list.

Canton Queen and **Zuba** have forthcoming entries in the next few days.

Previously Noted Horses

Caius Marcius, Canton Queen, Cliffs Of Moher, Crystal Ocean, East Coast Swing, Elysees, Elysees Palace, Exalted Angel, Highland Sky, Hulcote, Lord Glitters, Percy B Shelley, Pilaster, Quixote, Sangarius, Saluti, Sextant, Shareef Star, Tocco D'Amore, Thanks Be, Zuba, Venture

Jodie's Jottings

Jodie Standing

We couldn't have got off to a better start on Thursday with Mega Yeats, who created a little piece of history by being my first winner for my book.

Jamie Hamilton deserves a tremendous amount of praise for his intelligent ride aboard the daughter of Yeats. He kicked her to the front as the flag went up and used her stamina to steadily draw out the sting from the others, knowing he had a willing partner underneath him who would take him all the way to the line. She has such a relaxed way of going and is an exciting prospect for novice hurdles throughout the season.

On to Friday, and I thought we were home and hosed with Crownthorpe at Haydock, but he was collared in the final stride and beaten a nose. It was hugely frustrating as he had everything in his favour and things appeared to be going to plan. He then ran at Windsor three days later but was a little flat on a surface which didn't suit him. The handicapper has raised him 4lb to a mark of 86, which is still within range, but he's had a busy old season and his chance may have gone.

Ballykan looked very one-paced on his first start of the season at Fakenham. It's a tricky track and a race can often be nicked on the bend leading out into the back straight and that's exactly what Midnight Shot did. He quickened up and Ballykan had no answers and was left trailing to come home a distance second. I'm sure he's got another win in him, but he keeps bumping into one.

I may have let my heart rule my head with Laurens on Saturday in the QEII at Ascot. It was her first race against the boys and there was no guarantee that she would act on the soft ground. She was up in the van, as she usually is, but the engine stalled when push came to shove and she was readily brushed aside. P J McDonald confirmed she was tired after a long season but she will stay in training next year. It's been a tremendous year for her and she fully deserves a long break.

Over at Ffos Las I was excited to see my first 'Star Potential' pointer-to-pointer run – Young Bull. His form between the flags is fairly solid and the 20/1 available the night before didn't last long and he was backed down to 12/1 overnight before coming home at an SP of 8/1.

I thought the son of Dubai Destination ran a race full of promise and responded well to Harry Bannister's urgings after running green throughout. He's a big stamp of a horse with a long-reaching stride which he used to great effect to make up a good distance of ground up the home straight to grab third in the dying strides. A trip over 2m4f + would be ideal for him and he should have no problem getting off the mark soon.

Moving on to this week and it's another bumper packed weekend stretching through to a potentially brilliant card at Ayr on Monday.

Like last week we start off at Carlisle on Thursday where the opening novices' hurdle should prove to be an informative affair and I'm going to take a chance with Nigel Hawke's **Tanrudy** (1.55).

The Devon-based trainer doesn't waste his journeys to Carlisle and has a good strike-rate at the track. It is also interesting that he opts to run this unexposed ex-pointer here. Tanrudy was previously trained by Colin Bowe in Ireland where he ran well on all three of his starts and would have got off the mark had he not come up against three potential superstars in Eden Du Houx, Angels Breath and Malone Road who are now with David Pipe, Nicky Henderson and Gordon Elliott respectively.

The four-year-old showed good potential in the jumping sphere but was one paced in the final stages despite showing a commendable attitude to stay all the way to the line. By Presenting, I am sure the livelier ground conditions will suit him more than the testing ground he faced in Ireland and I hope to see him go well at a nice price.

A little later on the card I'm keen to stay on the right side of **Maire Banrigh** (3.05 Carlisle Thursday).

The daughter of King's Theatre appeared to benefit from a wind procedure operation and perhaps the better ground when getting off the mark in good style at Market Rasen, having disappointed on two occasions at Ludlow and Huntingdon on a soft surface.

An opening mark of 112 could look incredibly lenient and she can't go unbacked in her first handicap.

The worry would be Cause Toujours who I've selected previously. He was slightly disappointing last time when he was caught flat footed at Market Rasen and I rate him better than he showed. Carrying top weight around Carlisle won't be easy, however, which is why preference is given to Dan Skelton's mare.

Finally at Carlisle I'll be keeping a close eye on One Night In Milan as he makes his handicap hurdle debut from a mark of 102 (4.45).

When I was at Sedgefield a few weeks ago he was the only horse to catch my eye with the way that he finished off his race. Admittedly he was well beaten by Sonic in the novices' hurdle, but the manner with which he crossed the line indicated that there was plenty more left in the tank. It may be that he's a horse that doesn't put everything into his races, but he'll be interesting to watch now he has a mark and the Carlisle hill may suit.

I've been 'umming and aahing' whether to make him a selection, but at the price of 7/2 he doesn't offer much value. Especially when Theatre Act down the bottom of the weights looks poised to go close.

Down at Southwell in the concluding bumper **Lisdouin Bhearna** is set to make his Rules debut (5.10 Southwell Thursday).

I was really taken with the gelding when I saw him at Fergal O'Brien's last month and I was kicking myself that I hadn't included him in the book. His point form behind Dickie Diver and Minella Bobo reads well and I get the impression he is fairly well liked at home.

He's likely to need a trip in time but Fergal's record in bumpers speaks for itself and he wouldn't be starting him off here if he didn't think he was capable. He's also schooled over hurdles at home.

On to Friday and the action returns to the home of the jumps at Cheltenham but if I'm honest, I'm not going to get too carried away as the ground is set to be plenty quick enough and as a result the field sizes may be small. Brewin'Upastorm would be the only one of interest but his participation is highly unlikely and he will probably be saved for another day.

Saturday's card is slightly more interesting and **Calett Mad** needs to be followed in either the handicap chase or the handicap hurdle (2.00 or 3.45 Cheltenham and 3.00 Kelso Saturday).

He was a winner on the card 12 months ago in novice company and goes well fresh. A winner under both codes from a mark of 138, there still appears to be scope from his current rating of 142 and I'm sure he'll be primed for whichever race he goes for. He is also entered at Kelso over fences.

In the concluding bumper (5.30) I'll be closely watching point-to-point recruit Redzor, but connections have said he will not run if they don't get any rain, which at this stage looks unlikely. He got off the mark at the third time of asking after showing good promise on his first two starts. He's possibly not the most straightforward type, but clearly has ability although he is probably best watched in this hot contest. I see he has also been given at entry for Chepstow on Tuesday in an equally competitive maiden hurdle (2.20).

I'll be at the meeting for both days and I will be making plenty of notes which will hopefully be beneficial in the coming weeks and months.

Further north, Kelso look set to play host to a strong card and Rose Dobbin could unleash the second of my 'Star Performers' **The Hollow Chap** in the "National Hunt" Maiden Hurdle. He does have the option of going to Ayr on Monday, but I would only make him a selection there if Anytime Will Do didn't contest the novices' hurdle, or he ran in the bumper (1.50 Kelso Saturday or 1.30 and 3.50 Ayr Monday).

The son of Beat Hollow is a half-brother to the talented but mercurial Arkle Chase winner Western Warhorse and displayed both speed and stamina when making an instant impact on his point debut at Tinahely in February. Despite clouting the third from home he fought back gamely and produced a good turn of foot to win by two lengths in a time which recorded 10 second quicker than the day's average.

He's a hardy horse and connections think a lot of him. This step back to two miles should pose no problems given his pedigree and I'm hopeful of a good show.

On Sunday I'll be making the trip back up the M6 to Aintree but, like Cheltenham, it's a meeting more for making notes rather than having a bet, so no selections are advised.

Perhaps the best card of the weekend is up at Ayr. The advanced entries are seriously impressive and if the top names turn up, racegoers are in for a treat.

There's a clash of interests in the novices' hurdle with Jarveys Plate, Looks Like Murt and Anytime Will Do all pencilled in for the contest (1.30 Ayr Monday).

I put Jarveys Plate in Marten's *Dark Horses Jumps Guide* as one of my 'Ten-To-Follow' on the strength of what I saw at Fergal's yard. This is a big strapping chestnut with a lovely staying pedigree, so this starting point over two miles may be on the sharp side for him, despite him winning a bumper around Perth. I see he is also entered at Chepstow on Tuesday over 2m 3f

100y (2.20). That would be a more suitable option and I make him a selection if he runs.

Looks Like Murt was a big eye-catcher in his point-to-point in May 2017 when finishing like a train to clinch second position behind his stable companion Highland Hunter. He then picked up an injury after being sold which is why only now is he making his stable debut now. He's not devoid of speed and the good ground should suit, although I'd feel far more confident of his chance in a less competitive field for his first start under Rules.

Finally, **Anytime Will Do** brings solid form to the plate and will probably be the one to beat if he declares. Dan Skelton had him pencilled in for a Listed contest at Kempton last week but did not declare as the ground was too firm. He won well at Uttoxeter last time despite running green and clearly has a decent engine. As I've said, this is good opposition and he will need to raise his game again, but I believe he could develop into a top performer throughout the season and preference is given to him.

I've mentioned Jarveys Plate for the maiden hurdle at Chepstow earlier, but this could also be the starting point for 'Star Potential' point-to-point recruit **Quoi De Neuf**, Redzor and Down The Highway.

Down The Highway has a lovely pedigree being by Duke Of Marmalade out of a Sadler's Wells mare and won well on his debut at Cragmore, displaying a bright turn of foot.

Evan Williams' Quoi De Neuf looked to possess plenty of qualities necessary to reach a decent level under Rules. He's a lovely smooth traveller who is blessed with a good turn of foot and I think the long home straight at Chepstow will be right up his street.

His trainer may elect to keep him at home and save him for a slightly easier assignment, but I make him a selection if he runs, along with Jarveys Plate.

Finally on Tuesday the concluding bumper at Chepstow could see the debut of Our Bubba and **Norwegian Woods** (4.30).

Tim Vaughan's Arcadio gelding is not the biggest in stature, but he beat a good field in convincing style on his debut at Loughanmore and I liked his attitude in galloping relentlessly to the line. He also possesses plenty of toe and I expect him to make a promising start to his career.

Our Bubba also has an admirable attitude and I included him in the book as Stuart Edmonds does so well with his stock. The son of Scorpion gelding improved with each run and looked sure to be suited by a shorter trip and it's interesting to see connections think he has the pace to be competitive in a bumper.

To round off an action-packed weekend I want to add **Willie Boy** as an each-way ante-post selection at 33/1 for the BetVictor Gold Cup at Cheltenham on the 17th November.

I travelled to Wetherby last week with the sole purpose of seeing Charlie Longsdon's seven-year-old run in the Bobby Renton Chase. I didn't expect him to win but I wanted to get a good glimpse of him close up. This was the son of Tikkannen's first start for his new stable, having been moved from Venetia Williams, and he made a pleasing start to chase home ACDC. He jumped well on the pace and travelled smoothly until lack of race fitness came into play rounding the turn for home, but he saw out his race well to come home a good second behind the ultra-fit winner.

Gavin Sheehan said the gelding had a good blow down the backside and would have probably been around 80% fit. Charlie was positively bouncing with joy back up the walkway and said he had only done around three canters a day with him for 10 days. With this news you can expect Willie Boy to come on considerably for the run and I believe all efforts will be made to prepare him for the BetVictor.

He is versatile with regards to the ground having won on soft at Uttoxeter and Newbury over 2m4f in November 2017 from a mark of 132. Now rated 136 there should be room for improvement for this lightly-raced seven-year-old and at his current odds he is overpriced.

Selections

Tanrudy EW (1.55 Carlisle Thursday), Maire Banrigh (3.05 Carlisle Thursday), Lisdouin Bhearna (5.10 Southwell Thursday), Calett Mad (2.00 or 3.45 Cheltenham and 3.00 Kelso Saturday), The Hollow Chap (1.50 Kelso Saturday or 1.30 and 3.50 Ayr Monday), Anytime Will Do (1.30 Ayr Monday), Quoi De Neuf and Jarveys Plate (2.20 Chepstow Tuesday), Norwegian Woods (4.30 Chepstow Tuesday)

Ante-Post Selection

Willie Boy EW at 33/1 for the BetVictor Gold Cup

The Weekend News

Ian Carnaby

Champions Day at Ascot provided riveting entertainment and those who decided to go along with John Gosden and Frankie Dettori could hardly go wrong. Stradivarius holds his form wonderfully well, Roaring Lion managed to drop back to a mile and still win, while Cracksman simply destroyed the opposition in the Qipco Champion Stakes, just as he had last year.

From the way he shot clear and left a horse as good as Crystal Ocean in his wake, he would have given stable-companion Enable plenty to think about in the Arc, though there was no need for Gosden to put it to the test unless one of the owners insisted. Being sensible people, they leave him to sort out running plans.

Gosden would have been a world-class trainer under any circumstances, though I repeat a point I made a few weeks ago: there is no room for modest material at his establishment. He is not like a Hannon, a Channon or a Fahey, training for people right across the social spectrum. He trains for the mega rich and/or powerful and anything short of top class or at least capable of winning a top handicap after a break - Wissahickon being an excellent example - is not around for very long. Horses with a few unplaced efforts alongside their name simply do not exist.

Favourite backers had no complaints at Ascot, although there were a couple of setbacks for the form book. The Tin Man hardly ever runs a poor race but he was never going to win the Sprint and could not get anywhere near 28/1 shot Sands Of Mali, who was only fifth to him at Haydock. Episodes like this underline one of the few weaknesses with ITV Racing. There is a tendency to praise winning horses and connections come what may, when what we'd like to hear is the frank admission that the winner couldn't be fancied, even with the benefit of second sight.

The Balmoral Handicap left a rather large question mark dangling, as well. Sharja Bridge had run a very fair seventh in the Cambridgeshire and his trainer Roger Varian does well in these multi-runner handicaps. But Via Via finished four places in front of him at Newmarket and thirteen places behind him here. Via Via clearly has two ways of running and Ryan Moore decided that one way was to bounce out, head for the far rail and keep going for as long as possible. That really wasn't very long at all and, whilst I have seen the former champion ride his colleagues to sleep on countless occasions, I think Group races probably eclipse everything else for him now. Via Via, like last week's fifth Kynren, is worth keeping in mind for the Lincoln next spring.

Some horses shrug off a hard race quicker than others. The old sweat Everkyllachy, who misses very few Bath meetings, ran a good second under top weight in a Brighton Class 6 last week. He again did well when fourth in a blanket finish at Windsor on Monday but his conqueror at Brighton, Cool Strutter, made no impression in a poor sprint handicap at Kempton a few hours later.

Cool Strutter is quite interesting, though. John Spearing has improved him since the move from Karen Tutty and there was no fluke about the Brighton victory. He may need more time between his races and was unable to lead at Kempton, going the other way round to boot, so I shall have him on my list for next season if there are no signs of a problem with temperament. He was mounted in the chute at Kempton and taken down early, so there must be a slight worry.

I am one of the last scribblers to switch over to NH racing so I shall merely watch events unfold at Cheltenham this weekend. The golden rule at this stage of the season is to follow Nigel Twiston-Davies very closely and this year I think you can say the same about Philip Hobbs, who has plenty of well-handicapped horses after a campaign blighted by sickness last term.

Just reverting to Gosden, the Irish St Leger third **Weekender** must have a leading chance if turning out for the Group 3 Teddington Royal British Legion Stakes (2.20 Newbury Saturday). That is Group 1 form to follow his excellent effort in the Ebor under a hefty burden and he is still a relatively lightly-raced individual. Mark Johnston may have one or two of his hardy old stayers in the line-up but they will be taking on something here.

I have not had a great deal of luck with Henry Candy's horses this year but I am firmly committed to the cause and I believe we should stay with **Capton**, who made us a profit when fourth to Jazeel in a multi-runner handicap at Newmarket last time. One of the reasons I like Candy is that there is always the right amount of time between races and no temptation to run horses above their grade. Capton likes to be up with the pace and Ryan Moore rode him from in front at York in the spring. The handicapper shows little mercy and he is hardly thrown in at the weights in the George Busher 90th Birthday Handicap (4.30 Newbury Saturday) but this is exactly the right sort of test for him, he has not had a hard campaign and should give us another very good run.

As I expected, George Baker has Harry Hurricane in the sunracing.co.uk Handicap (3.25 Doncaster Saturday). Harry Hurricane is an 'iffy' sprinter who seldom runs two races alike and there was not all that much encouragement in his fourth on the AW recently. Having said that, he likes big fields and may outrun a big price. He is certainly low enough in the handicap and is currently number 24 on the list of entries. A very minor each-way investment is the call.

Selections

Weekender (2.20 Newbury Saturday), Capton (4.30 Newbury Saturday)

Marten Julian

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Selections

Thursday 25th October

Tanrudy (EW)	Jodie's Jottings	1.55 Carlisle
Marigh Banrigh	Jodie's Jottings	3.05 Carlisle
Lisdouin Bhearna*	Jodie's Jottings	5.10 Southwell

Friday 26th October

Frank Bridge	The Sleeper Section	4.00 Newbury
Herculean*	The Premier List Update	4.45 Doncaster

Saturday 27th October

Canton Queen	Marten's Weekend Action	1.45 Doncaster
Weekender	Ian Carnaby's Weekend News	2.20 Newbury
The Hollow Chap*	Jodie's Jottings	1.50 Kelso
Calett Mad*	Jodie's Jottings	2.00/3.45 Chelt
Kadar	The Sleeper Section	3.00 Kelso
Chatez*	The Sleeper Section	4.05 Doncaster
Capton	Ian Carnaby's Weekend News	4.30 Newbury
Herculean*	The Premier List Update	4.30 Newbury

Sunday 28th October

Bang On*	Marten's Weekend Action	12.40 Aintree
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Monday 29th October

Socru	The Sleeper Section	1.20 Leicester
Anytime Will Do*	Jodie's Jottings	1.30 Ayr
(If absent, The Hollow Chap)		
Chatez*	The Sleeper Section	3.05 Leicester
Evanescent*	Marten's Weekend Action	4.00 Redcar
Zuba	Marten's Weekend Action	4.45 Chelmsford
The Hollow Chap*	Jodie's Jottings	3.50 Ayr

Tuesday 30th October

Anytime Will Do*	Jodie's Jottings	1.35 Bangor
Bang On*	Marten's Weekend Action	2.20 Chepstow
Quoi De Neuf	Jodie's Jottings	2.20 Chepstow
Jarveys Plate	Jodie's Jottings	2.20 Chepstow
Evanescent*	Marten's Weekend Action	4.10 Catterick
Norwegian Woods	Jodie's Jottings	4.30 Chepstow
Lisdouin Bhearna*	Jodie's Jottings	4.30 Chepstow

*Horse has another entry

Marten's Ante-Post Advice

Sangarius WIN (advised at 33/1 for the 2,000 Guineas)

Quorto E/W (advised at 8/1 for the 2,000 Guineas)

Quorto E/W (advised at 16/1 for the Derby)

Jodie Standing's Ante-Post Selection

Willie Boy EW at 33/1 for the BetVictor Gold Cup