

the
Weekend
card



Marten Julian

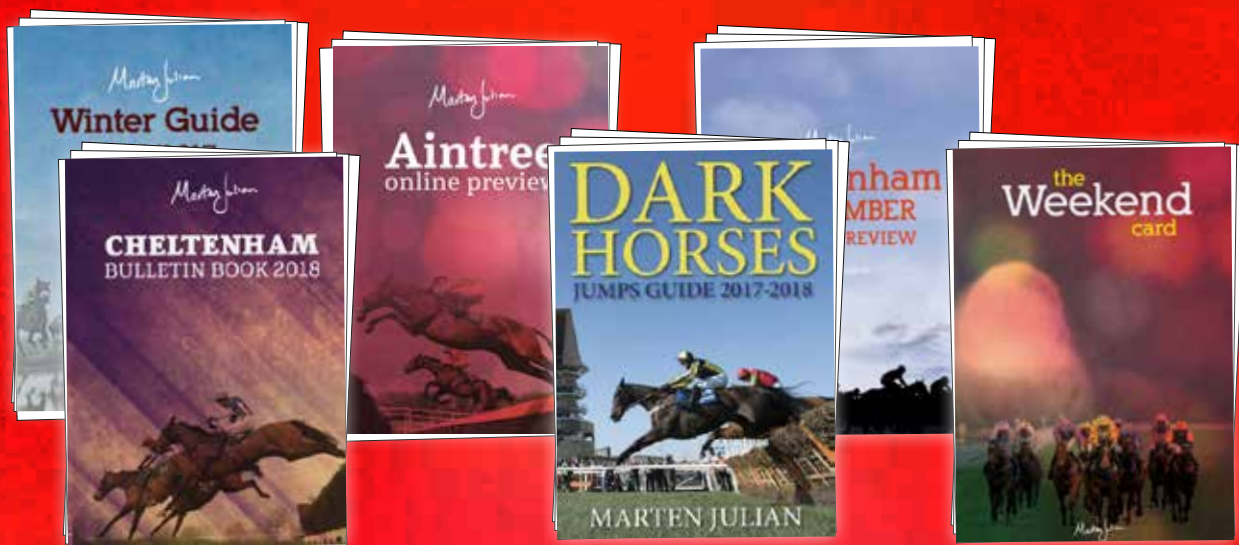
Jumps Season

2017/18

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The Sleeper Section

Marten Julian

Horses that have been added to the Sleeper Section this week are highlighted in blue. The flat horses featured below that are turf performers will be dropped from this list next week until the spring.

Albert's Back (3yr Bay Gelding) L 25/1, L 12/1

Albert's Back was very weak in the market before having to be withdrawn at the start of his race last time at Catterick for refusing to enter the stalls. It was disappointing that we couldn't see him run but it has to be a matter of concern that he misbehaved so badly. Let's keep an eye on him for a while longer.

Alwasmiya (2yr Bay Filly) L 11/8, WON 11/4

My concerns about the six furlongs stretching Alwasmiya's stamina proved unfounded when she stayed on well to win a competitive little maiden over that trip at Nottingham. The daughter of Kyllachy had shown plenty of ability at home and having missed her engagement last weekend she has been declared for the *6f Listed Bosra Sham Stakes at Newmarket on Friday (1.45)*. There are four fillies rated in the 90s against her but she works up to that mark at home and I am expecting a good run.

Declared for Newmarket on Friday (1.45)

Bakht Khan (2yr Chestnut Colt) L 8/1, 3rd 11/2, L 6/1

The son of Sepoy did too much too soon on his latest start at Kempton, not helped by running free from a wide draw. He should not be judged on this latest effort and has been given a mark of 71, which is very workable.

Chiara Luna (2yr Brown Filly) WON 4/5

Dermot Weld is very pleased with his batch of two-year-olds and this daughter of War Front has always been high in his pecking order. She is the first foal of Group 2 middle-distance winner Princess Highway, a half-sister to top stayer Royal Diamond and Group 3 winner Mad About You. She lived up to market expectations when landing some big bets on her debut in a 6f maiden at Leopardstown. She will now be trained in the spring for the Irish 1,000 Guineas. Her trainer says the reason she has not run this autumn is because she requires fast ground.

Eyecatcher (2yr Bay Colt) L 6/4

I'm not quite sure what to make of Eyecatcher's run at Pontefract. The son of Camelot had shaped with great promise on his previous start at Kempton and there were grounds for thinking, from his pedigree, that he would stay the mile and a quarter trip. However he did rather too much early in the race and then finished tamely in the closing stages, dropping back to fourth. Graham Lee was not hard on him close home and as anticipated last week he has been allotted a mark of 73. This should prove very workable next season in middle-distance handicaps.

Final Rock (3yr Bay Gelding) L 100/1

Final Rock is an imposing looking colt, with a tremendous physique and the scope to progress. Sir Mark Prescott gave him a fourth run, just a week after his third, to force the handicapper into giving the horse a mark. The tactic worked, because Final Rock has been given a rating of 50, which is about right on form but around 10lb lower than I expected.

I was in Sir Mark's yard for evening stables recently and he told me that Final Rock will be kept in training next season. He could be very interesting from such a low mark when he builds into his bulky frame.

G Eye Joe (2yr Chestnut Colt) L 9/2

James Given's son of Lethal Force showed early pace on his debut at Ascot before dropping away to finish last of seven. He will have come on appreciably for that run and should be a different proposition next time out.

Just Brilliant (2yr Bay Colt) WON 0/30

I was pleased to see this son of Lope De Vega make a winning debut for Peter Chapple-Hyam at Newmarket. The colt battled on well after being headed in a manner suggesting trips beyond a mile will suit him next year. He has not been left in the Racing Post Trophy on Saturday.

King Crimson (5yr Chestnut Gelding)

When I was working as Mick Channon's private handicapper they hoped that King Crimson would become their Royal Ascot two-year-old. He fell way short of that level, winning on his sixth and seventh starts at Bath and Carlisle and ending his juvenile year on a mark of 78. Since then he has won off 68, 71, 78, 79 and 80 but last autumn he moved from West Ilsley to join John Butler at Newmarket. In nine subsequent starts he has beaten just 10 horses home, dropping from a mark of 82 in October to 65. Those nine starts all came on the all-weather, but King Crimson has won most of his races on the turf, three times at Brighton. Keep your eyes peeled for King Crimson at a sharp track fairly soon. I am sure he retains his ability.

Lever Park (2yr Bay Filly)

Bryan Smart has handled some very speedy two-year-olds in his time and this daughter of Camacho has been showing him plenty of pace in her early work. She looks well bought at 52,000gns as a two-year-old as she is a half-sister to Group 3 winner Tax Free, the speedy Inexile, Green Beret and other useful types. Her pedigree is all about speed.

Magellan (3yr Bay Colt) WON 0/30

Magellan proved yet another winner for this feature when battling on gamely to land an extended 1m 4f maiden at Newcastle. I said on my line beforehand that it was significant that he was Roger Charlton's only traveller on the long trip from Beckhampton, and this victory is sure to make him an attractive prospect if he keeps his appointment in the Horses In Training Sale at Newmarket at the end of this month. Standing over 17 hands, he is the biggest horse the trainer has ever had at Beckhampton. A mark of 77 leaves him scope to progress. I see that he was not sold at 95,000gns at this week's Newmarket Horses In Training Sales, suggesting he probably had a reserve of £100,000. It will be interesting to see where he ends up.

Play Mate (2yr Bay Filly)

This daughter of Showcasing has shown Karl Burke a fair measure of ability in her work at home. She is a half-sister to four winners all at up to a mile out of a daughter of Cadeaux Genereux. Respect her when she appears.

Riverside Walk (2yr Bay Filly)

Keith Dagleish does not get many useful two-year-olds but he thinks the world of this daughter of Showcasing, who is out of a middle-distance winning daughter of a half-sister to 1m 4f Group 3 winner Gower Song and the family of Park Hill Stakes winner Idle Waters. She shaped well on her debut at Newcastle last week, given that the six-furlong trip was way short of her requirements. She has been declared for a 7f novice auction stakes at *Newcastle on Friday (7.15)*. She is set to receive 9lb from the penalised Harbour Vision and I expect her to be competitive. The step up to seven furlongs will suit her.

Declared for Newcastle on Friday (7.15)

Shamlan (5yr Brown Gelding) L 6/1

I get the impression that Shamlan was not fancied, despite market support, when down the field last time at Chelmsford. He was never travelling well at any stage but I am surprised that he has not dropped a pound or two in the ratings as a result. I want us to stay with him and I am convinced that there will be a big day for him.

Selections

Alwasmiya (1.45 Newmarket Friday), Riverside Walk (7.15 Newcastle Friday)

The Premier List Update – Flat Marten Julian

Here are the dozen Premier List horses from my 2017 edition of the Dark Horses Annual. I will include them in this feature for a few more weeks in case they take up an International engagement.

Chessman, Coronet, Crystal Ocean, Dal Harraild, Make Time, Mirage Dancer, Pivoine, Poet's Word, Red Label, Richie McCaw, Temple Church, Zainhom

Pivoine: Changed hands for a staggering 340,000gns at Newmarket's Horses In Training Sales earlier this week. I am not sure where his future lies.

The Premier List Update – Jumps Marten Julian

Here are the dozen Premier List horses from my 2017-18 edition of the Dark Horses Jumps Guide.

Debec, Just Minded, Lastbutnotleast, Lough Derg Spirit, Mount Mews, Not That Fuisse, Potterman, Ravenhill Road, Sam Brown, Samcro, Tea For Two, Waiting Patiently

Just Minded: Entered for a 2m 4f 0-135 novices' handicap chase at Carlisle on Sunday (1.30) from an opening mark of 122. It's no surprise to see this scopey six-year-old heading directly for handicap chases rather than a novice event. He won a bumper at this meeting a year ago before running well on his next four starts over hurdles. This is a good starting point for him and I am expecting a bold display.

Entered at Carlisle on Sunday (1.30)

Lough Derg Spirit: One of three entries made by Nicky Henderson for the *2m Listed William Hill Handicap Hurdle at Ascot on Saturday (3.00)*. The likely good ground will suit him and I gather he is considered reasonably well treated on his mark of 137 which is why novice chasing has been put on hold.

Entered at Ascot on Saturday (3.00)

Mount Mews: Has been entered for the *2m Tennent's Cup Scottish Champion Hurdle Trial at Ayr on Saturday (3.20)*. He is set to carry top weight of 11st 12lb (a mark of 145) so he has to concede weight away to some useful performers including Mirsaale and Chti Balko. Rated by trainer Malcolm Jefferson as good a young horse as he has ever had. Let's stay with him for a while.

Entered at Ayr on Saturday (3.20)

Not That Fuisse: Had to be pulled up on his hurdling debut at Market Rasen earlier this month and may be injured.

Ravenhill Road: Most impressive when making his hurdling debut at Sedgefield, beating weak opposition by a wide margin. Unbeaten in four starts – a point-to-point, two bumpers and a maiden hurdle - he is now ready for a step up in grade.

Sam Brown: A little disappointing on his hurdling debut at Wincanton last Sunday, weakening when ridden soon after the turn for home. Entered again for a 2m 4f novices' hurdle at Uttoxeter on Friday but unlikely to run so soon (1.35).

Entered for Uttoxeter on Friday (1.35)

Samcro: Beat his 21 rivals by 15 lengths and more on his hurdling debut at Punchestown earlier this month. Looks a top-class novice with either the Supreme Novices' Hurdle or Neptune likely spring targets. Jumped well in the main and will be very hard to beat at any level.

Tea For Two: Was never going on his return in the Old Roan Chase long before the 2m 4f trip, short of his best, became an issue. Trainer Nick Williams has found no reason for this display. Don't lose faith just yet.

Waiting Patiently: Connections have high hopes for this six-year-old, although there are mixed views about his likely trip. The owner believes he will stay three miles, while the trainer is keener to keep him to two miles. He is entered for the *Listed Colin Parker Memorial Chase at Carlisle on Sunday (3.35)*. This looks a very high-class renewal, with representatives from Paul Nicholls, Nicky Henderson and Venetia Williams. I want us to follow Waiting Patiently this season. He will enjoy the testing ground.

Entered for Carlisle on Sunday (3.35)

Selections

Sam Brown (1.35 Uttoxeter Friday), Lough Derg Spirit (3.00 Ascot Saturday), Mount Mews (3.20 Ayr Saturday), Just Minded (1.30 Carlisle Sunday), Waiting Patiently (3.35 Carlisle Sunday)

The Ante-Post Agenda

Marten Julian

I have brought your attention to **Sacred Life** following his mighty impressive six lengths defeat of Alba Power in the Prix Thomas Bryon, where the last three furlongs were each run in sub-12 second splits, suggesting this was every bit as impressive as it looked to the eye.

I was hoping to see him in the Criterium de Saint-Cloud last Sunday but the meeting was abandoned following industrial action. I am not sure if there will be another opportunity for him this autumn.

Just looking back to the Racing Post Trophy, there are various interpretations on the way the race was run. Saxon Warrior displayed great tenacity to regain the lead after Roaring Lion swept by him inside the final furlong. It's easy to understand why Oisín Murphy said afterwards that if he could ride the race again he would hang on for longer.

To my eyes the interesting horse is **The Pentagon**, who finished third.

Aidan O'Brien made it clear beforehand that the colt had missed a fortnight's work due to a slight setback and, in the race, Seamie Heffernan seemed at pains not to give his mount a hard time. Travelling well throughout, tucked in on the far side of the track, he stayed on steadily to finish a never-nearer third, leaving the impression he had more to offer.

Of the runners in the race The Pentagon has the strongest middle-distance pedigree. By the indomitable Galileo out of a dam that won the Group 1 Prix Saint-Alary over a mile and a quarter and had previously won at a mile and a half, The Pentagon is a half-brother to a number of winners at trips up to 1m 6f.

This colt's pedigree is all about stamina, so it is encouraging that he could prove so competitive in Group 1 company over a mile. At a top price of 10/1 for Epsom I recommend an early modest each-way interest as I am confident he will prove to be Ballydoyle's leading middle-distance three-year-old colt.

Sacred Life 33/1 (2,000 Guineas)

The Pentagon 10/1 (Epsom Derby)

Under The Radar

Marten Julian

Lucky Ellen has to remain on our list following her run at Wolverhampton on Tuesday evening. The portents were ominous beforehand, with a marked drift in her price on Betfair and then a walk out the bookmakers. Slowly away, she was behind and out of her ground for much of the way until making steady late headway in the straight.

The daughter of Elusive Pimpernel is out of a Peintre Celebre mare so I expect to see her thrive over a longer trip. She looks poised for a successful all-weather campaign this winter, especially when stepped up to a mile and a quarter or more.

The Plan Man has been entered for a 1m 4f handicap at *Dundalk on Friday evening (9.00)*. I have not lost faith that he will deliver for us one day.

Selections

The Plan Man (9.00 Dundalk Friday)

The Clock Watcher Marten Julian

Lord Glitters

The Weekend Action Marten Julian

That's Life missed his engagements last week but I see he is entered for a bumper at *Ayr on Saturday (3.50)*.

It's impossible to assess the opposition in these races but, as I wrote last week, this son of Presenting really fills the eye and he has done everything that has been asked of him at home. Whatever happens he is one to keep tabs on.

Stubytuesday is entered for a 7f 0-70 handicap at *Redcar on Tuesday (1.50)*. The horse now looks very exposed and, to my eye, lacks a gear but let's give him one more chance as he's maintaining a consistent level of form. I would still like to see him tried again over a mile or more.

I won't try and pretend that the Breeders' Cup does a great deal for me. Of course I will watch it, but the razzmatazz leaves me cold although I am sure it's a different thing when you are actually there.

I don't know much about Del Mar but I was chatting with Angus Loughran, of 'Statto' fame, at Aintree on Sunday and he assures me it's a closers' track.

Apparently the locals may not agree, suggesting the track can ride differently from one day to the next. One suggestion is that the track bias changes with the tide, favouring speedsters at low tide and closers at high tide, when the ground retains greater moisture.

The track is a mile in circumference with a home stretch of one and a half furlongs. Dirt replaced the synthetic surface in 2015 so it's important to look for dirt pedigrees, with five of the six European Breeders' Cup winners in the history of the meeting having been US-bred.

One horse that I hope to see run well there is **Lancaster Bomber** in the *Breeders' Cup Mile on Saturday (10.19)*. The son of War Front has been mixing it with the best all season, starting at Meydan in March and then last time floundering in the mud behind Persuasive in the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes.

Before that he had run second to World Approval at Woodbine, who is as short as 7/4 favourite to win this race. This tough colt requires fast ground to be seen at his best and he has the ideal conformation for handling the tight turns. At 12/1 he's worth an each-way nibble.

I am looking forward to seeing Highland Reel try and land the Breeders' Cup Turf for the second year in succession (*11.37*).

Having won 20 or the 23 runnings of the race, this is Europe's best chance of collecting. The pick of the home team is Beach Patrol, but this looks between Highland Reel and Ulysses, with the consistent Decorated Knight in with a squeak.

I am of the view that Ulysses is best at a mile and a quarter, while we all know that Highland Reel must have fast ground. Last year Seamie Heffernan excelled on the winner, leaving his rivals for dead when quickening clear. He comes here relatively fresh, having had his first run since July when finishing third to Cracksman at Ascot.

Ulysses was behind Highland Reel here last year but he's a much better horse this season. Yet, like Highland Reel, he is best suited to quicker ground than he faced in the Arc.

Of the others Cliffs Of Moher will collect something one day and Sadler's Joy was favourite to beat Beach Patrol last time. This looks an absorbing contest but not one in which I can recommend a bet.

We have plenty of selections running from elsewhere in this week's *Card*, notably from the Premier section, and I am not tempted by the action at Wetherby. Both Coneygree and Cue Card are reported to be in great fettle for the Charlie Hall Chase (3.15), with the gutsy Definitely Red a possible each-way value contender.

The gallant Lil Rockerfeller is very short at a top price of 5/4 for the Bet365 Hurdle (2.40), with Ptit Zig next best at 11/4 and Wholestone at 11/2. Watch for **Colin's Sister** to outrun her odds of 16/1 with the sponsors. She receives weight from all her rivals, is bred to appreciate the step up in trip and Fergal O'Brien is enjoying a tremendous run of form.

Selections

Colin's Sister EW (2.40 Wetherby Saturday), That's Life (3.50 Ayr Saturday), Lancaster Bomber EW (10.19 Del Mar Saturday), Stubytuesday (1.50 Redcar Tuesday)

The Weekend Selections Retrospective Marten Julian

This piece is devoted to retrospective analysis of last week's selections. If any of the horses that are featured in this section are entered and deemed worthy of selection then they will be found in my Weekend Action feature.

I have started to lose faith with **Caius Marcius**.

Having said that I am not convinced that Nicky Richards's horses are absolutely right at the moment, for all that he is getting winners. Caius Marcius was stepped up to two and a half miles at Aintree on Sunday, but he was never looking happy and plugged on at one pace to finish 23 lengths behind the winner.

He will be dropped 2 or 3lb for this but my advice would be to give him a mid-season break and to bring him back in time for the good ground in the spring. I am removing him from our list for the time being.

I expected **Chapel Stile** to win the extended 2m 6f handicap hurdle at Kelso on Saturday. The owner was certainly hopeful when we chatted two days earlier, but his one pace was never sufficient to get his head in front. He had been raised 3lb for finishing third the time before and he has now been raised a further 6lb, from 99 to 105, despite being beaten by a horse winning for the first time in nine starts over hurdles.

This looks very harsh to me, but they are learning all the time about Chapel Stile and I expect him to win a staying hurdle at some point before moving to his proper job as a chaser.

I would have been even more disappointed if **Better Getalong** had been beaten at Ayr on Monday. Yet even he made heavy weather of what should have been a fairly straightforward task. The son of Gold Well is probably the pick of the yard's novice hurdlers, but he did not seem to have much in hand of runner-up Quick Pick at the line.

I expect him to be seen the greater effect over two and a half miles.

Eldritch went through the ring for 200,000gns earlier this week and will now race in California. **GM Hopkins** was also sold this week, fetching 95,000gns. He is another set to race abroad, perhaps in the Far East. I gather from a friend linked to **Adamant** that he will return to action next season.

Previously Noted Horses

Abjar, Accidental Agent, Adamant, Ayutthaya, Better Getalong, Bolder Bob, Bravery, Chapel Stile, Coronet, Crystal Ocean, Dubawi Fifty, Finisher, Fleetfoot Jack, Giant's Treasure, GM Hopkins, King's Slipper, Mori, Peterport, Poet's Word, Quixote, Soliloquy, Stubytuesday, That's Life, Tocco D'Amore, Withhold

The Irish Angle

Stuart Williams

Disappointingly, both Fairymount Boy and Lockeen Girl failed to land a blow in their respective contests last week. However, I am convinced that the former still has more to come given a more enterprising ride, while the latter may have reached the ceiling of her ability for now.

On a more positive note, Gallahers Cross made the perfect start to life under Rules when running away with a decent looking bumper at Galway on Saturday. Those who availed themselves of the 4/1 on Saturday night were richly rewarded, with a starting price of 7/4 reflecting the regard in which the five-year-old is held.

Unfortunately, Minella Times wasn't declared at Wexford. However, the form of his point-to-point run received a timely boost at Wincanton on Sunday as Red River ran out a comfortable winner of a novice hurdle for Kim Bailey. Clearly Minella Times is ready to run and Henry De Bromhead is waiting for the ideal opportunity to introduce him to the racetrack.

Looking ahead to this week, our old friend **Hollow Tree** (2.30 Clonmel Thursday) is engaged at Clonmel on Thursday and holds every chance of going one place better in the hands of Davy Russell. Gordon Elliott's nine-year-old bumped into a clearly well-handicapped opponent (who received a 10lb rise) at Cork and will line up here off a 3lb higher mark.

This weekend boasts a top-class two-day fixture at Down Royal featuring the Grade 1 Champion Chase. Entries include Galway Plate winner Balko Des Flos, the rapidly progressive Road To Respect, former Stayers' Hurdle winner More Of That and last year's impressive victor Valseur Lido. Last season's talented batch of novices could be represented by the hugely exciting Irish Grand National winner Our Duke and dual Grade 1 scorer Disko.

Regular readers of my work will already be aware that I am a huge fan of Our Duke, who embodies all of the attributes of a good old-fashioned staying chaser. This will be an early test of his Gold Cup credentials.

On Friday there is a quality packed Grade 3 Mares Novice Hurdle, featuring Jessica Harrington's potentially smart four-year-old **Lesley Dawn** (1.15 Down Royal Friday), who made a sparkling debut over timber at Punchestown earlier this summer.

Although the competition is obviously far greater here, the manner in which she went about her business at Punchestown gave the impression that she is well worth trying in a race of this nature.

A little later there is a decent looking two-and-a-half mile novice chase featuring smart prospects such as Moulin A Vent, The Storyteller and Tombstone. However, I'm keen to keep the Henry De Bromhead trained **Avenir D'Une Vie** (3.00 Down Royal Friday) on side this season, in the hope that he can leave his hurdle form behind him now sent over the larger obstacles.

A promising bumper performer in 2015-16, the seven-year-old endured an interrupted campaign last season and can hopefully rediscover his true form granted a clear run this winter.

On to Saturday and there's an interesting looking two-mile handicap hurdle featuring representatives from all of the usual suspects. However, I want to side with the unexposed recent maiden hurdle winner **Out Of The Loop** (1.55 Down Royal Saturday), who accounted for a Willie Mullins trained odds-on favourite at Downpatrick.

A cosy winner under Mark Walsh, hopefully he can take advantage of the weight he will receive from more exposed rivals.

Later on the card **Anibale Fly** (3.05 Down Royal Saturday) is of interest in the Grade 2 chase. Tony Martin's seven-year-old has some smart form in the book, including when runner up in the Grade 1 Drinmore Novices' Chase last November, and has won when fresh in each of his last two seasons.

A few weeks ago I mentioned a former pointer called **Heroesandvillains** (4.10 Down Royal Saturday), who has received an entry in a warm-looking contest that closes card at Down Royal. Whilst there may be other nice prospects lurking, Noel Meade has his string in fine form at present and I am hopeful of a bold showing on his debut.

Finally, on Sunday there's a well contested three-mile Listed Novice Hurdle which could become a showdown between recent winners Cracking Smart and **Moyross** (1.40 Cork Sunday).

Preference would be for the latter who boasts a course and distance win on his CV and will relish the soft conditions he will encounter at Cork.

Selections

Hollow Tree (2.30 Clonmel Thursday), Lesley Dawn (1.15 Down Royal Friday), Avenir D'Une Vie (3.00 Down Royal Friday), Out Of The Loop (1.55 Down Royal Saturday), Anibale Fly (3.05 Down Royal Saturday), Heroesandvillains (4.10 Down Royal Saturday), Moyross (1.40 Cork Sunday), Tully East 40/1 (Ante-Post - BetVictor Gold Cup)

Jodie's Jottings

Jodie Standing

It was rather a mixed bag in the end last week.

I was apprehensive to go for so many selections, but I felt they all warranted their place and in the end, when the declarations were made, there weren't as many as there might have been.

We started off with Bigirononhiship at Carlisle. Having always thought he was a dour stayer, I was left unconvinced on Thursday that he saw out the 3m 2f trip. He jumped to the front at the fourth from home, but didn't appear to get up the hill.

Friday saw Slate House take the concluding maiden hurdle at Cheltenham. He made all under his jockey and looked a decent prospect going forward.

On Saturday, Coologue never fired in the opening handicap chase - a race he had won 12 months ago. He looked fit enough in the paddock, but was let down by his jumping and was pulled up on the turn for home.

Thomas Campbell finally came up with the goods in the handicap hurdle and was heavily backed to do so. He was available at 5/1 overnight but returned the 5/2 ready winner. He was gleaming in his coat and the step up to three miles appeared to suit.

One horse I was looking forward to seeing in the paddock was Cracking Destiny, but I was very disappointed with what I saw. To my eye he lacked substance and there was also no spark with him. Having read Nicky Henderson's blog the night before, where he described the horse as "busy", I was expecting to see an individual on his toes. Whether the hood he was wearing had put him to sleep too much, I am not sure.

He was a little keen in the early stages of the race and there was nothing left in the tank when the button was pressed.

On Sunday at Aintree my two point-to-pointers clashed in the first race, and unfortunately, I sided with the wrong one. Global Citizen was weak in the market - he looked the part in the paddock - but he was too keen throughout the race and had very little to offer once off the bridle. By contrast, On The Blind Side was well-backed and found plenty at the finish and won with authority.

Oldgrangewood ran as well as I expected in the Old Roan Chase. He's a nice horse and will find his race.

Finally Posh Trish, who looked an absolute picture in the paddock, won her bumper in the stewards' room.

I was very impressed with her tenacity to rally under pressure. She is a stayer and the long home straight definitely played to her strengths. She will come on leaps and bounds for this and

I imagine she'll be sent hurdling now.

Over at Wincanton, Storm Home, despite being keen, ran a race full of promise over a trip that was probably shorter than ideal. He rallied well with the more experienced winner and the two pulled a healthy distance away from the rest.

Onto this week, and again it's a busy one.

On Thursday Court Liability is set to tackle hurdles for the first time in public (*1.30 Sedgefield*). He won a bumper for us a couple of weeks ago at Fontwell and despite not been bred for speedy assignments he won well from the front and battled gamely. This step up to 2m 5f looks ideal and I will be disappointed if he cannot go close, although the competition looks fairly decent.

Also in action is Good Man Pat (*1.40 Stratford*). He left me scratching my head a little last time he ran. He was backed as if defeat was out of the question and despite travelling like the winner throughout, he found less than expected off the bridle. I put it down to him needing the run, and I expect him to be hard to beat here.

On Friday, I look forward to seeing **Monbeg Zena** if she takes up her engagement at Uttoxeter (*1.00 Friday*).

The daughter of Flemensfirth travelled with eye-catching ease in her point-to-point and displayed a defiant attitude to repel her rivals close home. She looks a lovely scopey mare and I was impressed with what I saw. The form has also been franked several times since, indicating that it was an above-average contest.

This looks a good starting point, but she is bred to stay a trip and I imagine she'll be seen to even greater effect when the emphasis is on stamina.

Also at Uttoxeter, keep an eye on Pontresina in the novices' hurdle (*1.35*). Oliver Sherwood is going through a quiet spell at the moment, but this English point-to-point winner warranted a place in the *Jumps Guide* as he looked above average when scoring decisively from a subsequent easy winner.

The race may also feature fellow point winner **Chooseyourweapon** for Evan Williams (*1.35 Uttoxeter Friday*). His form looks solid after Turtle Wars, now with Nicky Henderson, opened his account over hurdles on Tuesday with a fine effort behind the more experienced Whatmore at Bangor.

The expensive son of Flemensfirth has stuck in my mind since I saw his victory and I would hope he can translate his form to racing under Rules. He's a real grinder and I would like to see him race prominently to make use of his stamina.

Finally on Friday, Felix Desjy looks likely to enhance his already glowing reputation with another bumper victory (*4.10 Down Royal*). I suspect he'll be an odds-on chance to do so, but I think he's destined for big things in time.

Up at Wetherby on Saturday, Ballymoy could make his hurdling bow (*12.55*). I made him a selection for his bumper debut at Market Rasen in September where he ran with promise despite being keen in the early stages. Nigel Twiston-Davies' horses are flying at the moment and I'll be watching him with interest. He is also entered at Ascot in a much deeper race (*12.40*).

Another trainer to have his horses in fine form is Paul Nicholls and one horse I want to be with is last season's point-to-point recruit **Topofthegame** (*1.50 Ascot Saturday*).

The five-year-old is one of the biggest horses in Nicholls' yard and if there was any horse built for fences, then it's him. He brings rock-solid hurdles form to the plate having finished runner-up to Beyond Conceit at this track in February, who subsequently went on to be placed at Grade 1 level behind The Worlds End at Aintree.

I believe this season the son of Flemensfirth will go from strength to strength over the larger obstacles.

The card is rounded off with a very competitive bumper which could see last week's selection **Net De Treve** in the line-up (*4.05 Ascot Saturday*).

He finished second in his point-to-point having been sent off the heavily backed 6/4f, but he left the impression that there was plenty left to work on.

Derek O'Connor anchored the four-year-old towards the rear of the field and never put him into the race until the fourth from home. Had he not fluffed his lines at the third last, which knocked him off his stride, he might have finished a lot closer.

The galloping track could play into the strengths of this Network gelding and he should prove to be a nice prospect in time.

Selections

Monbeg Zena (1.00 Uttoxeter Friday), Chooseyourweapon (1.35 Uttoxeter Friday), Topofthegame (1.50 Ascot Saturday), Net De Treve (4.05 Ascot Saturday)

The Weekend News

Ian Carnaby

There is little point in dwelling on near misses in racing, though I must say it was galling to see both Roaring Lion and Pastime beaten a neck at Doncaster on Saturday.

At 8/1 and 9/1 it would have made for a very profitable day and both might have been called the winner a hundred yards out. Roaring Lion's erratic challenge into a fierce wind enabled Saxon Warrior to get back up in the Racing Post Trophy, while Pastime came to win his race but was also reeled in close home. His young rider did nothing wrong but, when I drew attention to Pastime's chances, I thought David Egan would be in the saddle.

Roaring Lion should have won, I thought. That is not to say I agree with the most voluble ITV commentator, who thought he lacked determination in a tight finish. Against Moore in full flight, you sometimes have one chance and in this instance it involved holding on to a horse who was careering forward at a rate of knots for just a second or two more. Roaring Lion went past Saxon Warrior too soon and then gave him a bump into the bargain. It looked a very, very difficult steering job indeed and I mean no offence when I say I think Moore would have won on either horse.

The former champion did us a good turn later on, of course, winning on David Elsworth's Sir Dancealot. No one will be ordering champagne at 10/11 (though I'd favour Doncaster over Cheltenham in that regard) but, as I mentioned a few weeks ago, there is money to be made through studying Moore's bookings for 'outside' yards - Elsworth, Roger Charlton, Henry Candy, Kevin Ryan, Richard Fahey, etc.

Finally on the Racing Post Trophy, Aidan O'Brien deflected various questions in favour of general praise for the entire Ballydoyle team, which was fair enough, though hardly original. But this time he referred to the care and attention which goes into the breeding schedule. Saxon Warrior may be out of a Galileo mare but his sire is the Japanese stallion Deep Impact, who all but burst the pari-mutuel mechanism when wave upon wave of supporters backed him for the 2006 Arc. Sadly, he could finish only third behind Rail Link and was subsequently disqualified anyway but he was a brilliant racehorse and looks like having a profound influence at stud.

Newmarket keeps going very nearly to the final curtain and there will be big fields this Friday and Saturday. In the Wingate Signs Supports Superjosh Charity Handicap (3.30 Newmarket Friday), I note that Tom Tate may have a very rare runner south of the Trent in Rail Link's son Waiting For Richie, who won narrowly over two miles at Newcastle last time. The trainer invariably takes him out when there is cut in the ground but the word 'firm' appears in the advance going description this week, so Waiting For Richie has an each-way chance.

However, the choice has to be Alan King's **Coeur de Lion**, who was a shade disappointing behind October Storm at York but had previously finished runner-up in the Cesarewitch Trial here. It is worth noting that he had the summer off and there is every reason to suppose he will be fresh enough for this before reverting to the winter game.

Over the years I have learned that James Fanshawe often has winners at the back-end meetings and the inmate of his that interests me this weekend is the Authorized filly **Permission**, who is

entered for the Listed Weatherbys General Book Online James Seymour Stakes (2.55 Newmarket Saturday) and the Price Bailey Ben Marshall Stakes (3.30 Newmarket Saturday), another Listed contest.

This is a tricky choice for James (and for us) because Permission is effective at ten furlongs (the 2.55) and a mile (the 3.30). She missed much of the summer but has twice run well here recently and last time chased up Chain Of Daisies over the longer trip. That was for fillies and mares, whereas she will be up against the boys here over the same trip of ten furlongs. I favour this race because the 3.30 may well attract shock Cambridgeshire winner Dolphin Vista (who is doubly engaged as well), together with the heavily-backed Lord Glitters, who won a red-hot Ascot handicap from a seemingly impossible position. When I managed to find Dark Red the other day I did not expect him to finish third at 25/1 next time. They would both be raised in class in this, of course. I shall back Permission in either race but prefer the former.

There are so many races where we need our horse to fight back that it can be quite galling to see it happen the other way round, so to speak. That is what happened to **Pastime** at Doncaster and I seldom go for a horse just seven days after a tight finish. He'd had two months off beforehand, however, and Josephine Gordon may be available in the Imp Graphics Handicap (4.00 Newmarket Saturday). Pastime is a tough, consistent sort and I hope he can go one better.

I appreciate there is excellent NH fare on offer but I tend to concentrate on the Flat until it's all over for another year.

Selections

Coeur de Lion (3.30 Newmarket Friday), Permission (2.55 or 3.30 Newmarket Saturday), Pastime (4.00 Newmarket Saturday)



Marten Julian

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Selections

Thursday 2nd November

Hollow Tree The Irish Angle (Stuart Williams) 2.30 Clonmel

Friday 3rd November

Monbeg Zena Jodie's Jottings 1.00 Uttoxeter
Lesley Dawn The Irish Angle (Stuart Williams) 1.15 Down Royal
Chooseyourweapon Jodie's Jottings 1.35 Uttoxeter
Sam Brown The Premier List Update 1.35 Uttoxeter
Alwasmiya The Sleeper Section (Marten) 1.45 Newmarket
Avenir D'Une Vie The Irish Angle (Stuart Williams) 3.00 Down Royal
Riverside Walk The Sleeper Section (Marten) 7.15 Newcastle
The Plan Man Under The Radar (Marten) 9.00 Dundalk

Saturday 4th November

Topofthegame Jodie's Jottings 1.50 Ascot
Out Of The Loop The Irish Angle (Stuart Williams) 1.55 Down Royal
Colin's Sister (EW) Marten's Weekend Action 2.40 Wetherby
Permission Ian Carnaby's Weekend News 2.55/3.30 Newm't
Lough Derg Spirit The Premier List Update 3.00 Ascot
Anibale Fly The Irish Angle (Stuart Williams) 3.05 Down Royal
That's Life Marten's Weekend Action 3.50 Ayr
Mount Mews The Premier List Update 3.20 Ayr
Pastime Ian Carnaby's Weekend News 4.00 Newmarket
Net De Treve Jodie's Jottings 4.05 Ascot
Heroesandvillains The Irish Angle (Stuart Williams) 4.10 Down Royal
Lancaster Bomber (EW) Marten's Weekend Action 10.19 Del Mar

Sunday 5th November

Just Minded The Premier List Update 1.30 Carlisle
Moyross The Irish Angle (Stuart Williams) 1.40 Cork
Waiting Patiently The Premier List Update 3.35 Carlisle

Tuesday 7th November

Stubytuesday Marten's Weekend Action 1.50 Redcar

The Ante-Post Agenda

The Pentagon 10/1 (Epsom Derby) – Marten Julian

***This horse also has another entry.**

**** Time may alter if the race splits into two divisions.**

Jumps Season

2017/18

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