



ASCOT

KING GEORGE VI STAKES PREVIEW

SATURDAY 26 JULY



RACE 1

THE BRITISH EBF
CROCKER BULTEEL
'CONFINED'
MAIDEN STAKES,
6F

PRIZE MONEY
£50,000

RACE 2

THE SODEXO
LIVE! PRINCESS
MARGARET STAKES,
6F

PRIZE MONEY
£70,000

RACE 3

THE LONGINES
VALIANT STAKES,
7F 213Y

PRIZE MONEY
£85,000

RACE 4

THE MOET &
CHANDON
INTERNATIONAL
HANDICAP STAKES,
7F

PRIZE MONEY
£150,000

RACE 5

THE BETFRED
HANDICAP STAKES,
1M

PRIZE MONEY
£60,000

RACE 6

THE KING GEORGE
VI AND QUEEN
ELIZABETH STAKES,
1M 3F 211Y

PRIZE MONEY
£1,500,000

RACE 7

THE ME2 CLUB
HANDICAP STAKES,
1M 3F 211Y

PRIZE MONEY
£25,000

RACE 8

THE WHISPERING
ANGEL HANDICAP
STAKES,
5F

PRIZE MONEY
£60,000

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THE KING GEORGE VI AND QUEEN ELIZABETH STAKES

RUNNER BY RUNNER

By **Jamie Lynch**



Our Senior Form Analyst on Saturday's mouth-watering renewal of the richest race ever run at Ascot, live on Sky Sports Racing.

JAN BRUEGHEL



Some at Ballydoyle are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. If **Jan Brueghel** is indeed to become a great – and he has the scope to do so, if still a way to go – then it won't be by birth nor chance but achieved, and achieved the hard way, chipped and chiselled from a slab of steel and stamina, a matter of engineering, a horse built to grind and find.

Of the stable's four previous King George winners, he's most matched with Highland Reel, another Galileo workhorse who was greater than the sum of his parts, likewise a pre-race sweater, and he too came to the King George as a 4-y-o via the Coronation Cup. The mode and method of what Jan Brueghel did at Epsom gave rise to my nickname for him of The Fire Extinguisher, as there are few if any middle-distance horses around who bring the fire that Calandagan can, and Jan Brueghel doused him in a drawn-out duel which was stealthily stacked in his favour by virtue of the track, the ground and the servicing gallop by team-mate Continuous, the St Leger team.

Before Conduit in 2008/9, the last St Leger winner to add the following year's King George was Ballymoss in the 'fifties, the first big Flat horse for Vincent O'Brien, a training giant on whose shoulders Aidan is standing at Ballydoyle. The conditions and configuration of Ascot, along with lessons learned from Epsom, makes for different battlelines with Calandagan for one, besides a stronger supporting cast, but the rhythmical, robotic Jan Brueghel gets a software upgrade after every race and beginning to beg the question of not how does he win but how does he get beat?

CALANDAGAN



The high-powered Ballydoyle brute, who got first run courtesy of another Moore masterclass, was just too strong in the end, but **Calandagan** had run the faster in each of the prior five furlongs, in the process recording much the higher top speed. Yes, the Coronation Cup, but also the Juddmonte from last year, against City Of Troy, when both dipped under Sea The Stars's track record.

No horse around, let alone in this field, could have done what Calandagan did at York that day, yet the inconvenient truth is the missing link which has prompted the uncomfortable sequence of seconds which naturally raise some doubt about his stamina or spirit or both. Stamina and spirit are the calling cards of Jan Brueghel, hence a bit of a trap was set for Calandagan in the Coronation Cup, to suppress his speed by drawing him into an advanced arm wrestle, Epsom the perfect playground for such a strategy, which ended in Calandagan waving the white flag in surrender.

The Coronation Cup SPs of 8-13 Calandagan versus 10-3 Jan Brueghel told a tale of one's superior status, obviously not so coming out, but this is a different day and a different course on different ground, all of which tip the scales back towards Calandagan, more so after his confidence booster in a Ballydoyle-less Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud and the reminder of not just what he can do but also how he does it, a set of skills designed for fast ground at Ascot, highlighted when he blew us away in last year's King Edward VII.

KING GEORGE DAY RUNNER BY RUNNER

Continued

REBEL'S ROMANCE



£37,259 per furlong; that's the exchange rate for a flagbearer these days. In 26 races across five seasons and six different countries, **Rebel's Romance** has earned over £10.8m, which works out at £37,259 for each of the 290 furlongs he has dutifully galloped on the track, including, don't forget, 45½ furlongs on dirt in the second chapter of an amazing anthology which makes him objectively one of Godolphin's most influential horses and subjectively Charlie Appleby's best buddy, his importance intensified as he stood tall when everything else from the stable retreated from the biggest stage of all at Royal Ascot.

Rebel's Romance is a great racehorse, yet he's not a racehorse of great ability, and so he can't win an elite race like the King George, can he? The answer to some extent can be found in the last three winners, as both Goliath and Pyledriver were unconsidered, either side of Hukum who was fourth-favourite and a similar price to Rebel's Romance, a reminder that when electricity fails, efficiency triumphs. And Rebel's Romance is the epitome of efficiency, albeit suckered into racing too close to the hot pace when third last year.

KALPANA



Perhaps part of the consideration into retiring Bluestocking after the Arc was that Juddmonte already had the heiress apparent in **Kalpana**, who did what Bluestocking couldn't as a 3-y-o and win the Fillies & Mares Stakes on Champions Day, putting her 5 lb ahead of where Bluestocking was at the same stage.

She may yet bloom into Bluestocking mkII because you wouldn't hold against her that she hasn't kicked on so far in 2025, in deep against some of the best boys in the Tattersalls Gold Cup before trying to give 12 lb weight-for-age to Oaks runner-up Whirl in the Pretty Polly, both over 1¼m, when 1½m made a discernible difference to her last year, as it will again now. Her defining moment came on soft ground and, in the unlikely event it came up similar, you can envisage her putting it to the "big two", remembering how dominant she was last October (her last 3f was faster than Calandagan and co in the 10f Champion Stakes), though she has won twice – by wide margins – on good to firm. Kalpana has definitely got the game to win a race like this at some stage.

CONTINUOUS



Once a St Leger winner, now reduced to the role of pacemaker for the newer wave of stable stars, he and Wayne Lordan getting it right for Jan Brueghel at Epsom, less so for Los Angeles at Royal Ascot.

VERDICT

"If you learn from defeat, you haven't really lost."
That's the mantra for **Calandagan** as he goes into battle once again with Jan Brueghel, with lessons to be learnt from Epsom to put into practice at Ascot, under far more conducive conditions, the fact that this race is likely to be around 10 seconds faster in the completion than the Coronation Cup a significant stat for Calandagan, who can go to speeds the others can't reach.





KEY RACES STATS GUIDES

By **Paul Jones**

No one knows more about the crucial trends behind the key races than Paul Jones, who has compiled comprehensive stats guides for some of Saturday's key races.



RACE 2 SODEXO LIVE! PRINCESS MARGARET STAKES

13:40PM (BST)

Group 3 | Class 1 | 2YO

☑ POSITIVES:

The favourite
Contested the Duchess Of Cambridge Stakes
A top-six finish in the Queen Mary or Albany Stakes
Once-raced
Made debut at Newmarket
Drawn in stall 1

☒ NEGATIVES:

Outside the first two in the betting
Beaten on debut



RACE 3 LONGINES VALIANT STAKES

14:20PM (BST)

Group 3 | Class 1 | 3YO+

☑ POSITIVES:

Last-time-out winners
Trained by William Haggas
Drawn in stall 7 or higher

☒ NEGATIVES:

Aged 5 or older
Fewer than three starts earlier in the season



RACE 4 MOËT & CHANDON INTERNATIONAL HANDICAP

15:00PM (BST)

(HERITAGE HANDICAP) | Class 2 | 3YO+

☑ POSITIVES:

Contested the Royal Hunt Cup, Buckingham Palace Stakes or Bunbury Cup
Four-year-olds
Trained by Richard Fahey, Charlie Johnston or John & Thady Gosden
Towards the front of the market

☒ NEGATIVES:

Drawn low



RACE 6 KING GEORGE VI AND QUEEN ELIZABETH STAKES

16:10PM (BST)

Group 1 | Class 1 | 3YO+

☑ POSITIVES:

Owned (or part-owned) by Sheikh Mohammed or Michael Tabor
Fillies/mares
A high-half draw

☒ NEGATIVES:

Outside the front four in the betting
Beaten in last year's race



ANTEPOST TIPS

By **Gary Nutting**

PINA SONATA | THE LONGINES VALIANT STAKES | 14:20



Pina Sonata has been given a Group 1 entry since landing a short-priced gamble under a penalty in a Leicester novice two months ago and has the class potential to bridge the official ratings gap in the Longines Valiant Stakes at Ascot on Saturday, **live on Sky Sports Racing**. James Fanshawe was already on record saying how highly he rates the three-year-old, saying after that victory (backed down to 8-13 from a morning price of 7-4): “She’s a big, strong filly and very classy - we’re going to have to aim for black type now.”

In light of those unequivocal comments, I’m taking the view that she’s more likely to go for this Group 3 event, which currently looks wide open at up to 6-1 the field, than take up her entry in a 0-95 handicap at the Qatar Goodwood Festival next week. The selection has looked well above average on both starts since finishing fourth at 80-1 on her debut last backend, Fanshawe confirming that she had “grown up an awful lot” since then.

The trainer is not noted for throwing Group 1 entries around like confetti, so her potential participation in the Matron Stakes at Leopardstown speaks for itself and this could be an ideal stepping-stone to that September engagement.

TEROOMM | THE BETFRED HANDICAP STAKES | 15:35



The progressive **Teroomm** got no elbow room whatsoever when it mattered in the Britannia at the Royal meeting here and merits another chance to show what he can do in the Betfred Handicap on Saturday, **live on Sky Sports Racing**. Roger Varian’s colt was drawn closest to the stands’ side rail in the 3yo cavalry charge and couldn’t find a way through the congestion, trying to make his challenge over two furlongs out under a hold-up ride in a group that contained 20 of the 30 runners. As a result, his finishing position of 17th, beaten under seven lengths, can have a line put through it - better to focus on the profile he had built to that point, featuring a hat-trick of wins after an eye-catching juvenile debut last backend. The third of those victories came in Haydock’s Silver Bowl, traditionally a strong handicap, which he sealed with the type of assassin’s challenge that Silvestre de Sousa was attempting to replicate at Ascot before the crowd scene closed in on him.

From a Grade 1-winning family in the States, he gets another chance to show the 6lb he was raised for that success likely underestimates him - this time in a field guaranteed to have no more than 21 runners (will be fewer unless all acceptors stand their ground). Bullet Point heads the market after his near-miss against heavily backed favourite My Cloud in the Hunt Cup but another rise in his official rating, combined with the weight-for-age allowance, puts the younger selection in with a fighting chance in receipt of 10lb at twice the price and a bit more in some lists.



TIMEFORM TIPS

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---------------------------|
| RACE 1 | 1st | NEW MONARCH (5) |
| | 2nd | WORDS OF TRUTH (7) |
| | 3rd | DARK SHORE (1) |

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|-----------|-----|-------------------------------|
| RACE 2 | 1st | STAYA (10) |
| | 2nd | FLOWERHEAD (8) |
| | 3rd | DANCE TO THE MUSIC (4) |

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---------------------------|
| RACE 3 | 1st | ROYAL DRESS (4) |
| | 2nd | CAJOLE (8) |
| | 3rd | CHANTILLY LACE (9) |

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---------------------|
| RACE 4 | 1st | FRESH (10) |
| | 2nd | AALTO (16) |
| | 3rd | CLASSIC (19) |

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|-----------|-----|-------------------------|
| RACE 5 | 1st | TEROOMM (9) |
| | 2nd | FEARNOT (8) |
| | 3rd | BULLET POINT (1) |

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|-----------|-----|----------------------------|
| RACE 6 | 1st | JAN BRUEGHEL (3) |
| | 2nd | CALANDAGAN (1) |
| | 3rd | REBEL'S ROMANCE (4) |

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|-----------|-----|------------------------|
| RACE 7 | 1st | TENABILITY (3) |
| | 2nd | KUREDU KING (6) |
| | 3rd | CRIMINAL (4) |

| | | |
|-----------|-----|------------------------------|
| RACE 8 | 1st | GLAMOROUS BREEZE (10) |
| | 2nd | TROPICAL STORM (2) |
| | 3rd | MICHAELA'S BOY (13) |



Simmering winning the 2024 Sodexo Live! Princess Margaret Stakes



Elnajmm winning the 2024 Betfred Handicap



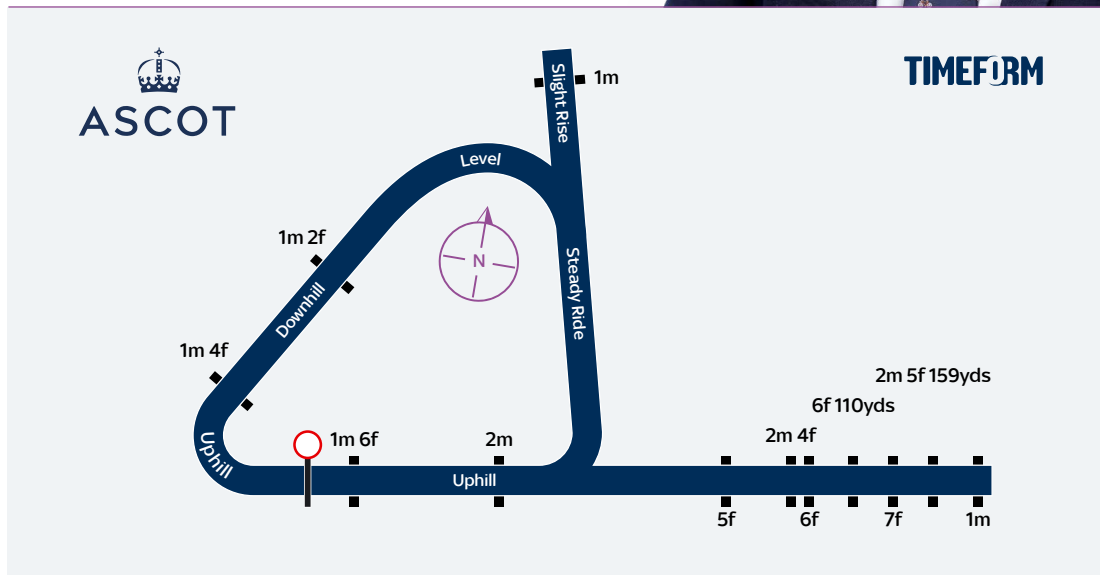
Albasheer winning the 2024 Whispering Angel Handicap

GUIDE TO ASCOT

By Classic-winning jockey and Sky Sports Racing presenter
Jason Weaver

“Because the run-in on Ascot’s round course is relatively short, positioning - jockeyship in other words - is key. It goes without saying that in steadily-run races you want to be towards the sharp end but, whatever the pace, you can get into trouble trying to come through rivals late on. We’re still learning about the straight course, following the relaying a few years back, but in my view it’s more pace-dependent than draw-dependent. Given the right pace to chase, I reckon you can win from anywhere.

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The round course is a right-handed, triangular circuit of fourteen furlongs, with a run-in of 2.5 furlongs. There is a straight mile course and the Old mile course which joins the round course in Swinley Bottom. Despite the downhill run into Swinley Bottom and relatively short run-in from the final turn, Ascot is galloping in character. Since the redevelopment, the turn into the straight has become more sweeping and those ridden prominently can be difficult to peg back. Nowadays, the ground in the straight drains quicker than the rest of the course, meaning going descriptions can vary.

