

CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL - SUPREME NOVICE HURDLE - www.allsportstips.com

EARLY BIRD SELECTION - SKYLIGHT HUSTLE 33/1 - 0.5 EW!!

Before we get into the obvious candidates I want to take a look at some of the bigger priced outsiders with high official ratings. There's a few that stand out at attractive prices who have clearly proven themselves to a higher standard than the odds suggest.

Outsiders...

KOKTAIL BRUT 100/1 - OR 140

HEADS UP 50/1 - OR 133

SKYLIGHT HUSTLE 33/1 - OR 145

MOSSY FEN ROAD 66/1 - OR 137

The highest rating in the field is currently with the favourite OLD PARK STAR whose rating of 151 sits in the bracket close to previous winners of the race over the past 20 years. Simply put there's not been many horses rated below 150 that have won this race. There's not many rated over 150 going into this year.

SKYLIGHT HUSTLE earns his 145 rating with a 5 length Grade 1 win in the Future champions novice at Leopardstown. (KOKTAIL BRUT ran here and came last)

I think that this Gordon Elliott horse is being overlooked in the market due to the hype surrounding EL CAIROS. This seems to be the pick of the yard and most pundits but at 11/2 seems very short considering he's hardly beaten anything of note. EL CAIROS fell at Leopardstown when clearly winning the race before winning a maiden hurdle on heaven ground at Thurles in January. Not many questions were asked by Jack Kennedy and he won that easily - however the form is nowhere near as strong or as impressive as his market rivals IMO.

I personally think SKYLIGHTS HUSTLES win in the G1 is a better marking stick and at 33/1 this is the Gordon Elliot horse I'd rather have a bet on in the race.

HEADS UP has plenty to find on ratings but has shown on multiple occasions now that he's a very capable horse. He was second in behind NO DRAMA THIS END in the G2 at

Cheltenham in November and won his most recent race at Punchestown. He's got entries for this and the Turners. I think he can outrun his odds in either of those races and is priced 50/1 in both at the time of writing.

KOKTAIL BRUT has not had ideal preparation heading into this race. Surprised if he ends up running here on the day tbh.

I feel like the bubble may of burst for MOSSY FEN ROAD after recent defeat at Musselburgh where he was beat from odds of 1/3 with little viable excuses by a horse rated only 118 at the time. MOSSY achieved a high rating after an 8 length win at Chepstow.

The form from that race is pretty bobbins. The talk of this horse being a potential Grade 1 winner for the Harry Derham yard seems possible in future, but this might be a bridge too

far at this stage of career.

These types of races are very hard to find big price winners.

It can happen (LAIBAIK rated 137 in 2017 was 50/1 for example) but it's usually won by one of the top prospects with a big rating. For this reason OLD PARK STARS short price of

15/8 at the top of the market, seems fair and about right. I'm not sure how much you need me to hype this ones chances up, this has already been done across the board. The horse has done his talking on the pitch. He dismantled a top prospect in HURRICIANE PAT by nearly 20 lengths. That horse had won 3 in a row and beat SOBER GLORY (now 14/1 for this race) by a good 10 lengths. OLD PARK STAR was asked minimal questions in the process.

Now let's look at the contenders who have genuine EW chances in the race.

The question we need to ask now is can any of these horses improve 10lbs to get to the levels that OLD PARK STAR is clearly capable of... (Not only does OPS have a rating of 153 with Timeform he also has the 'p' next to his name... this represents 'improvement to come' they are convinced he can run to a higher standard in his future races and he probably will) - the reality is - improving 10lbs might not even be enough!

The second highest rated is TALK THE TALK at 9/2 with 148 on Timeform. (BALLYFAD 20/1 & KING RASKO GREY 20/1 both have high ratings due to the form in the Irish Novice Hurdle G1 at Leopardstown in Feb - The three had blanket finish ahead of two already highly rated runners in this race (KOKTAIL BRUIT and BLAKE)

Joseph O'Brien on Talk The Talk:

Skybet Supreme Novices' Hurdle, 9-2 Turners Novices' Hurdle, 6-1

"He's a bit unlucky not to be four from four over hurdles. He's an exciting horse for the spring festivals. We think the Supreme is the race we'd like to go for, but we won't lock it in until we discuss it internally in the run-up to Cheltenham. It was a very tactical race at Leopardstown last time and he did well to win. He's learning from race to race and his jumping isn't something we're too worried about medium term. Off the back of a fall at Christmas, it was important he found a nice early rhythm last time and we wanted to ride him patiently to do that. We knew that tactically it might not be the place to be and that proved the case, but he managed to get himself out of trouble. He probably exceeded our expectations, as we were prepared to get beaten given how we wanted to play our hand tactically."

It's SKYLIGHT HUSTLE with the next highest rating at 146...

Contenders... MIGHTY PARK 10/1 - 140

MY DADDY PADDY 12/1 - OR 138 SOBER GLORY 12/1 - OR 139

IDAHO SUN 16/1 - OR 141

BARON NOIR 33/1 - OR 126

You can see from these ratings - the secondary fancies have plenty to find. These are the most hyped few, 'hyped' might be the wrong word for some as the likes of SOBER GLORY have clearly earned the ratings and plaudits of the back of recent efforts. He's now won his

last two races by a combined distance of 50 lengths. His win on heavy ground at Newbury most recently was an absolute rout. He beat the 126 rated KADASTRAL in the process. I'm quite surprised his rating is so low at this stage and think he deserves a better rating off that effort. I think SOBER GLORY has a chance in this race.

Philip Hobbs and Johnson White on Sober Glory: Skybet Supreme Novices' Hurdle, 12-1

"It's been a very good season apart from that blip at Sandown, which we still haven't found a reason for. Everything else has gone very well.

"It's happened a few times where he's won very easily, beating only two or three proper opponents, but those few have been reasonable and he's beaten them a very long way, so then the question is have they run poorly or are we just very good?

"His times have been good, which is important, and there seems to be a lot of money for him, which I hope punters are right about. The softer the ground, the better for him"

MIGHTY PARK doesn't have an official rating as yet but has entered the conversation based on a 38 length win in a madden hurdle in January. He's less proven than 90% of the field but subsequent comments from Willie Mullins comparing him to FAUGHEEN have seen his price collapse. It's quite rare for Mullins to hype them up, especially at this stage of the career. He also has an entry and is joint fav for the turners with NO DRAMA THIS END. It's not fully clear where he goes at this stage. He could be anything but for me is a hype horse at this point as although what we saw was impressive in Jan - what did he beat?

SOBER GLORY beating a 126 KADASTRAL by 27 lengths in comparison - is a rout of note.

Willie Mullins on Mighty Park:

"When Mark [Walsh] got off him, he said he had a look around at the second-last and couldn't believe how far in front he was, going what he thought was just a normal, slow pace. He said his cruising speed must be huge. He's a fantastic jumper and that puts him right in the mix.

"He has to be a hell of a horse to do what he did. Any horse who wins by 38 lengths, you're into sort of Faugheen-type territory and those things don't happen very often. I'm always slagging JP, saying I think you're running my Champion Bumper horse in a maiden hurdle! From day one I've always thought he was good enough to win a Champion Bumper. That was the sort of performance he was showing me at home. "My gut is telling me he has to be a hell of a horse. Listening to Mark when he got off him, he must have huge natural ability. Looking at him you'd

probably say Turners, but when you listen to Mark and see what he did on the day, those things don't happen very often." I can't fancy MYDADDYPADDY here at 12/1. There was so much buzz and hype for him at the start of the season (based on little evidence to be fair) that the price has collapsed. Fair play if you're on about 25/1 but how can we take 12/1 for PADDY when IDAHO SUN is 16/1? IDAHO SUN beat him, and pulled clear. PADDY needs to reverse that form before even thinking about the rest of the field. One of the most annoying comments you hear around Cheltenham is "if he was trained by Mullins or Hendo he would be shorter" - but you can't help thinking that Harry Fry's IDAHO SUN fits the mantra for that here at 16/1... Highest rated on official ratings but the best price of the

lot...

Harry Fry on Idaho Sun: Skybet Supreme Novices' Hurdle, 16-1

"I've been very happy with him since the Formby. He's done everything right over hurdles and I'm really excited for the Supreme. He's progressed with each run and I think he'll be better at Cheltenham than he was at Aintree.

"I've great respect for the other horses in the race who maybe have higher profiles, but we've got the form in the book and he's got course experience from finishing sixth in the Champion Bumper last season. We're confident he can rise to the challenge"

SUPREME NOVICES' HURDLE — AT A GLANCE

- Grade 1 | Novice hurdle
- Distance: 2 miles (approx. 2m 87y)
- Track: Cheltenham (Old Course)
- Pace: often a strongly-run speed test
- Ideal profile: quick, accurate jumper; handles undulations

