

TIMEFORM

Your complete guide to the

NEWMARKET JULY FESTIVAL



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Introduction

Welcome to the 2018 Newmarket July Festival magazine presented by Timeform, which features previews and tips for the big races on Friday and Saturday.

There are now seven Group 1 sprints in Britain for three-year-olds and upwards, with Saturday's Darley July Cup (£283,550) behind only the Diamond Jubilee and British Champions Sprint in terms of prize-money for the winner. The Diamond Jubilee has proved a good guide to the Newmarket feature in recent years—Starspangledbanner and Lethal Force are amongst those to have completed the double since the turn of the century—but the first six from that Ascot event are all missing from the entries for the latest renewal of the July Cup, and instead it is the King's Stand winner **Blue Point** who heads the betting at this stage. No horse has completed the King's Stand/July Cup double since Never So Bold in 1985, but Blue Point's defeat of Battaash last time is by far the best form on offer here, and he rates the clear one to beat if reproducing it over this extra furlong.

Godolphin also look set to be represented by **Dreamfield**, who lost nothing in defeat, despite failing to land a gamble, when second in the Wokingham at Royal Ascot last time, while 10 of the 18 entries at the five-day stage are trained by Aidan O'Brien. **U S Navy Flag** was a dual Group 1 winner at two, and could be the pick of the Ballydoyle runners dropping back to sprint trips for the first time in 2018. The one-two from the Commonwealth Cup, **Eqtidaar** and **Sands of Mali**, are other members of the classic generation who will be taking on their elders for the first time, while **Redkirk Warrior** adds a bit of international flavour; he had only two behind him in the Diamond Jubilee, but had previously beaten the winner Merchant Navy when landing a Group 1 in his native Australia.

O'Brien will be bidding to win the other Group 1 at the meeting, Friday's Falmouth Stakes, for the third year in succession, and the master of Ballydoyle has whittled his eight entries at the five-day stage down to just one, last year's Duchess of Cambridge Stakes winner **Clemmie**. She went on to be crowned champion two-year-old filly in 2017, but has been firmly put in her place by **Alpha Centauri** in two starts so far this term, and it is hard to see her reversing the form here. Indeed, Alpha Centauri looks a match for any miler in Europe given how impressive she was when winning the Coronation Stakes at Royal Ascot, and taking on her elders for the first time is unlikely to prove a major stumbling block in her pursuit of a Group 1 hat-trick.

Three of the first four from the Albany Stakes, won by **Main Edition** at the Royal meeting, clash again in the latest renewal of the Duchess of Cambridge, also on Friday. The winner is now unbeaten in three starts and could yet have more to offer, but it would be no surprise to see Godolphin's **La Pelosa** improve past her; she was beaten just a neck at Ascot, with the winner's greater experience perhaps the difference between them on the day. Godolphin have also won two of the last three renewals of Saturday's Superlative Stakes, and look set to be represented this time round by **Quorto**. He created a really good impression when making a winning debut at Newbury and should relish the step up to seven furlongs on breeding.

Two of the most competitive heats of the entire year—the Bunbury Cup and, as an added bonus, the John Smith's Cup at York—are also covered in detail in this magazine, providing opportunities for those looking to back one at a bigger price. Timeform's team of analysts also bring you their best bets from four of the other handicaps at the July Festival, so head over to the [Betfair Sportsbook](#) to place your bets!

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2018 Newmarket July Festival
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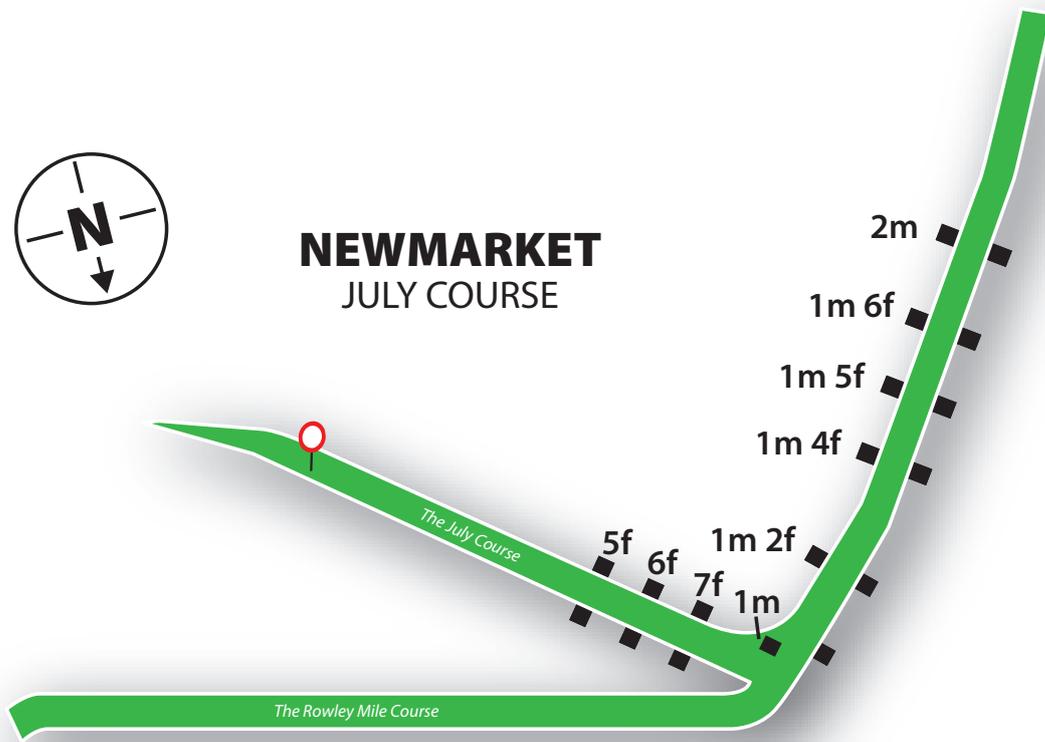


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Newmarket Track & Stats



The July Course is two miles and a furlong in extent with a right-handed bend at halfway, the first mile being part of the Cesarewitch course, the last the straight Bunbury mile. There are undulations for the first three quarters of a mile of the straight, the course then runs downhill for a furlong before climbing to the line. As with the Rowley Mile course, ability to see out the trip thoroughly is essential.

MOST SUCCESSFUL TRAINERS AT NEWMARKET 2013-2017

Trainer	Wins	Runs	%	Trainer	Wins	Runs	%
Mark Johnston	55	282	19.50%	Richard Fahey	28	195	14.36%
John Gosden	51	258	19.77%	William Haggas	23	172	13.37%
Richard Hannon	45	331	13.60%	Charles Hills	21	204	10.29%
Charlie Appleby	43	205	20.98%	Sir Michael Stoute	20	157	12.74%
Saeed bin Suroor	37	171	21.64%	Andrew Balding	18	128	14.06%

Clemmie (blue/orange) broke the two-year-old course record when winning last year's Duchess of Cambridge Stakes



Duchess of Cambridge Stakes

A six-furlong sprint for two-year-old fillies, the Duchess of Cambridge Stakes (formerly known as the Cherry Hinton) has been won by some classy fillies, though it's been a long time since it was won by a future 1000 Guineas winner, with the most recent being Attraction in 2003/4. She was trained by Mark Johnston, and the Middleham-based trainer has another leading contender in this year's renewal ...

Main Edition tops Timeform's weight-adjusted ratings (albeit only narrowly) and this lengthy filly has done little wrong so far, winning all three starts to date, including minor events at Windsor in May and Goodwood in June. She completed her hat-trick in the Albany Stakes at Royal Ascot last time by a neck from **La Pelosa** and has the scope to improve further still, likely to play a part in all the top fillies' races throughout the season. La Pelosa was strong in the betting and made a good start

when winning a minor event at Kempton in May by three lengths from **Chaleur** and confirmed herself a useful filly in the Albany. Main Edition's greater experience played a factor there, and it wouldn't be a surprise were La Pelosa to reverse the form now. Chaleur improved as expected to get off the mark in a minor event at Leicester last time by three and a quarter lengths from Parion. She still didn't look the finished article there and is open to plenty of progress, so needs considering.

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Aidan O'Brien is seeking a hat-trick, having won this race in recent years with Roly Poly (2016) and Clemmie (2017), and he will be hoping that **Gossamer Wings** can take another step forward. She won a 5f maiden at Navan (by half a length from Rita Levi) in June and showed much improved form when a short-head second to Signora Cabello in the Queen Mary Stakes at Royal Ascot last time, travelling strongly and making smooth progress two furlongs out. She was strong at the finish that day and will be suited by the return to six furlongs here. Fellow Irish challenger **Chicas Amigas** has performed creditably up in grade since winning her maiden at Dundalk, runner-up in a listed race at Naas before finishing five and a half lengths seventh to Main Edition in the Albany. There's plenty to like about her physically and she's the type to go on improving throughout the season.

Pretty Pollyanna made a winning start at Yarmouth last month, well positioned in a race which was run at just an ordinary gallop, but was much improved just eight days later when two and a quarter lengths fifth to Main Edition in the Albany, and should have more to offer. Haydock winner **Angel's Hideaway** was one place ahead of her in fourth and, given she has the physique to go with her pedigree, will likely do better still for her top yard.

Come On Leicester and **Alicia Darcy** complete the nine-strong field. The former is

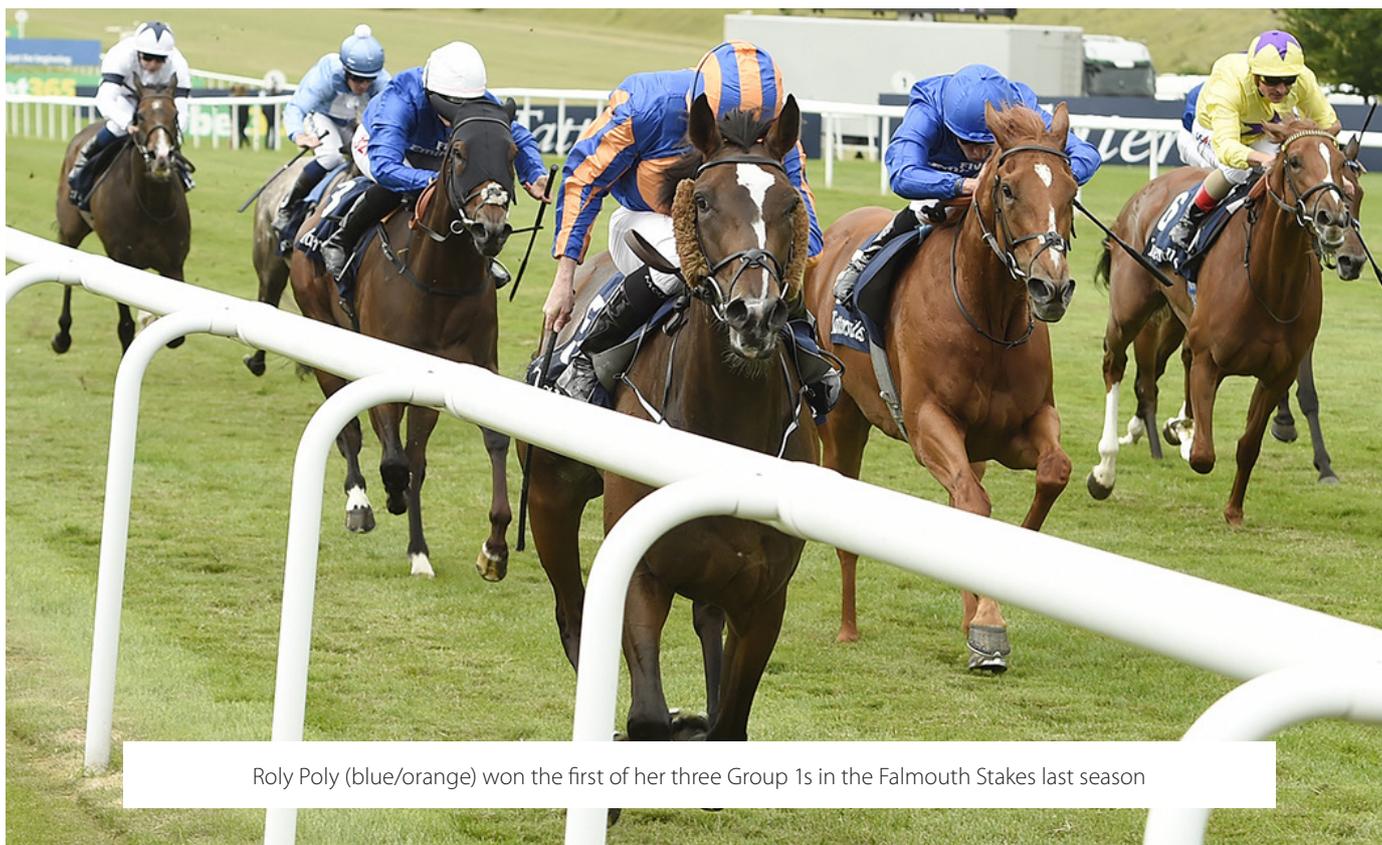
of most interest, having done well to finish as close as she did in the Queen Mary Stakes at Royal Ascot, first home in the far-side group. She was below form when not beaten far at Windsor since, but possibly found that race coming too soon and is well worth a try at this trip (raced only over five furlongs to date).

Clearly the Albany Stakes is the key piece of form, as five of the nine runners here contested that Group 3 at Royal Ascot. Main Edition emerged victorious that day, and Mark Johnston's unbeaten filly will be tough to master again, however that was only the second career outing for runner-up **La Pelosa** and she should have learned plenty from the close finish. The twice-raced Pretty Polyanna, who was fifth that day, is also respected with that experience under her belt.

Timeform Ratings (weight adjusted)	
MAIN EDITION	118p
LA PELOSA	117p
GOSSAMER WINGS	114
PRETTY POLLYANNA	111p
ANGEL'S HIDEAWAY	111

Selection	Bet now
LA PELOSA	

Duchess of Cambridge Stakes - Past Winners						
2017	Clemmie	2-9-0	11/8f	Aidan O'Brien	Ryan Moore	8 ran
2016	Roly Poly	2-9-0	6/1	Aidan O'Brien	Ryan Moore	10 ran
2015	Illuminate	2-9-0	7/4jf	Richard Hannon	Richard Hughes	9 ran
2014	Arabian Queen	2-9-0	4/1	David Elsworth	Ryan Moore	5 ran
2013	Lucky Kristale	2-8-12	20/1	George Margaron	Tom Queally	8 ran



Roly Poly (blue/orange) won the first of her three Group 1s in the Falmouth Stakes last season

Falmouth Stakes

The Tattersalls Falmouth Stakes is run over one mile on the second day of Newmarket's July Festival. The Group 1 event for three-year-old fillies and older was won last season by the Aidan O'Brien-trained Roly Poly, who was following up her victory in the Duchess of Cambridge Stakes at this meeting 12 months earlier—the same double that Clemmie will be attempting to achieve when lining up in a select field on Friday...

Also trained by Aidan O'Brien, **Clemmie** was crowned the leading two-year-old filly last season and headed the ante-post betting for the 1000 Guineas through the winter, having followed her Duchess of Cambridge win with a decisive success in the Cheveley Park Stakes at Newmarket (Rowley Mile) on her final 2017 start. Things have not gone to plan this time round, though, as she met with a setback earlier this season and is yet to build on last year's promise, putting in another lacklustre display

when 12 lengths fifth to **Alpha Centauri** in the Coronation Stakes at Royal Ascot last time. She has questions to answer here as a result, but it is still too early to write her off given the promise she showed at two; she is certainly in the right hands to retrieve something from the season.

Whether she can retrieve anything more than place money with Alpha Centauri in opposition again here is doubtful, however. An impressive winner of the Irish 1000 Guineas at the Curragh (by one and three-quarter lengths from Could It

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Be Love) in May, Alpha Centauri took her form to a new level when following up in the Coronation Stakes (by six lengths from **Threading**) last time, hitting the front two furlongs out and quickly forging clear. The highest rated three-year-old in Europe on that form, she looks likely to take all the beating granted her optimum conditions here (disappointed in two starts on soft), which she looks likely to get as things stand. This first meeting with her elders is nowhere near the test it might have been either—the two older horses in the seven-strong field, last year's third **Arabian Hope** and recent Curragh Group 2 winner **Opal Tiara**, are both only smart at best and have plenty to find on weight-adjusted ratings.

Threading looked a smart performer when winning a listed race at York (by seven lengths from Dance Diva) in May, and fully confirmed that promise when chasing home Alpha Centauri at the Royal meeting, that a stronger piece of form in an altogether higher class of race. She has plenty about her physically and looks the type to do better still as the year progresses, no surprise if she were to emerge as the chief threat to the favourite again here. Stablemate **Nyaleti** is thriving on her racing, winning her last two starts in a listed race at Goodwood and the German 1000 Guineas at Dusseldorf last time, but this represents by far the stiffest task of her career to date, taking on a rival of Alpha Centauri's calibre, and a place is likely the best that she can hope for.

The field is completed by the Roger Varian-trained **Altyn Orda**. She won the Oh So Sharp Stakes at Newmarket (Rowley Mile) as a two-year-old, but has come up short in three starts in pattern company this time round and looks likely to do so again here.

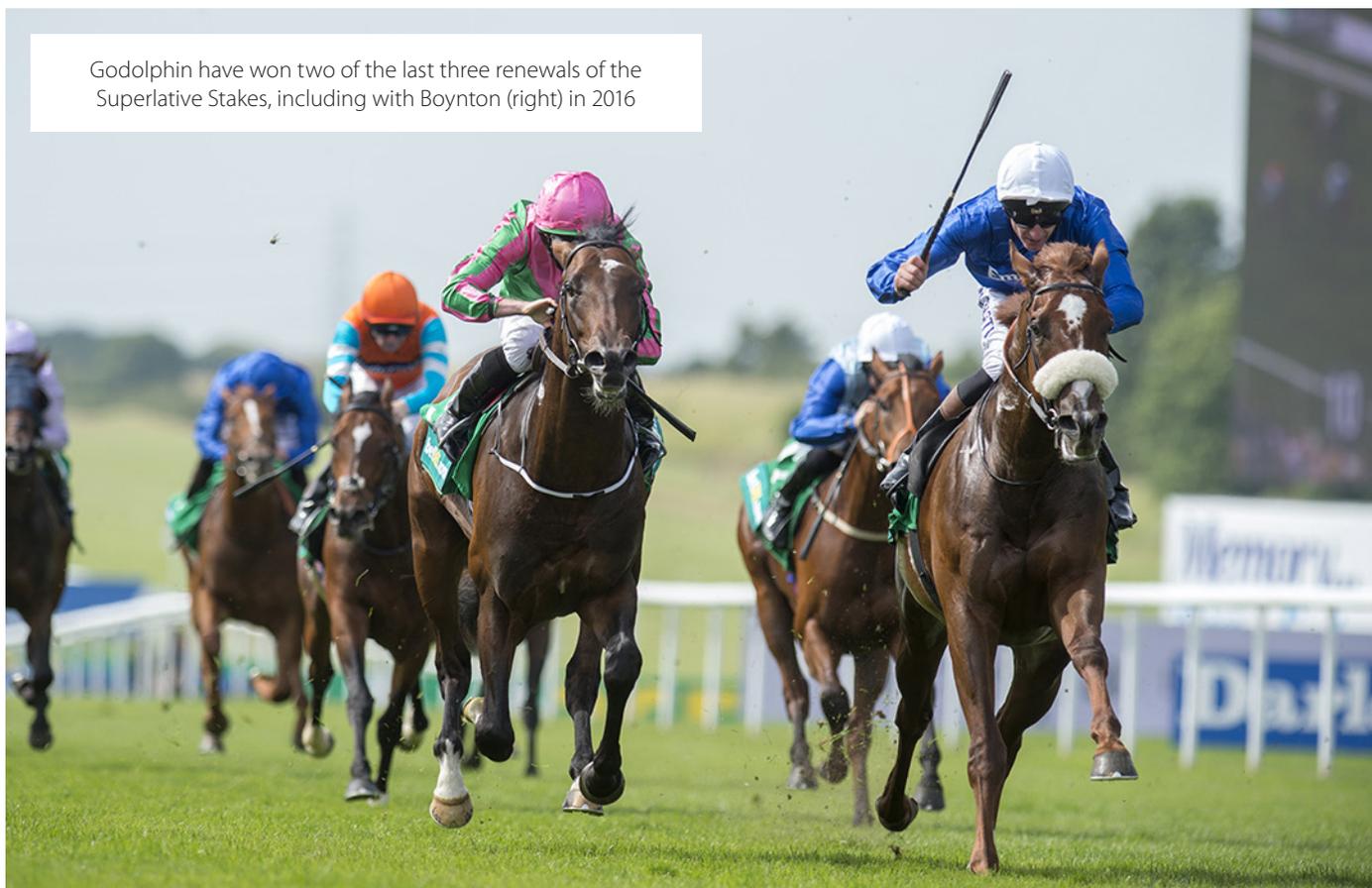
In summary, this race makes little appeal from an each-way perspective with just the seven runners going to post, and it is hard to escape from the claims of **Alpha Centauri**. She proved herself to be one of the best milers around when winning the Coronation Stakes last time—a performance that was backed up by excellent timefigure—and is hard to oppose on these terms, with the two older horses in the line-up not really coming up to scratch. Threading again makes most appeal for the forecast spot.

Timeform Ratings (weight adjusted)	
ALPHA CENTAURI	136
CLEMMIE	124
NYALETI	120
THREADING	120
ARABIAN HOPE	119

Selection	Bet now
ALPHA CENTAURI	

Falmouth Stakes - Past Winners						
2017	Roly Poly	3-8-12	6/4f	Aidan O'Brien	Ryan Moore	7 ran
2016	Alice Springs	3-8-12	5/2	Aidan O'Brien	Ryan Moore	7 ran
2015	Amazing Maria	4-9-7	17/2	David O'Meara	James Doyle	7 ran
2014	Integral	4-9-7	15/8f	Sir Michael Stoute	Ryan Moore	7 ran
2013	Elusive Kate	4-9-5	3/1	John Gosden	William Buick	4 ran

Godolphin have won two of the last three renewals of the Superlative Stakes, including with Boynton (right) in 2016



Superlative Stakes

The Superlative Stakes on Saturday was given its current name in 1991, to honour Superlative who won the July Stakes at this meeting in 1983. Winners this century include Dubawi (2004), now one of the best stallions in the world, who carried the royal blue colours of Godolphin during his distinguished career on the track, as did Birchwood (2015) and Boynton (2016) when winning this race in more recent years...

Boynton was trained by Charlie Appleby and last month's Derby-winning handler is set to be represented in this year's renewal by **Quorto**. The first foal out of the smart Volume (finished placed in both the English and Irish Oaks), Quorto was value for extra when making a winning debut over six furlongs here last month, quickening to lead over a furlong out and readily drawing clear (eased down late on). Already verging on useful, the extra furlong here is expected to suit on breeding

and it would be no surprise to see him take this step up in class in his stride with a big run.

The Hannon family also have a good record in this race over the years—Richard Hannon Sr. won it four times, while Richard Hannon Jr. was successful in his first season with a licence courtesy of Estidhkaar in 2014. The yard has two to choose from in this year's renewal, **Urban Icon** and **Neverland Rock**, with the former making most appeal on what they have achieved

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so far. He has created a good impression in winning minor events at Windsor in May (form working out well) and Salisbury last time, and remains open to plenty of improvement, especially now stepping up to seven furlongs.

Aidan O'Brien is typically mob-handed at the five-day stage, as he attempts to follow up Gustav Klimt's win in this race 12 months ago. Figuring out which of his eight entries are the most likely to run is no easy task, but **Cape of Good Hope** and **Mohawk** boast two of the more attractive profiles coming into the race. A full-brother to Highland Reel and Idaho, Cape of Good Hope showed improved form to open his account at the third attempt at Tipperary last time and looks well worth a try in a higher grade on the back of that, while Mohawk stepped up on his debut form, despite still looking green, to get up close home on his most recent outing at Cork. **Sergei Prokofiev** is the pick of the O'Brien-trained entries on form, but it seems unlikely that he will be asked to step up to seven furlongs here, with big races over six on the horizon.

The John Gosden-trained **Daافر** built on the promise of his debut to get off the mark at Newcastle last time, putting the race to bed in good style before the runner-up got the hang of things and ran on once it was all over. He is another who should relish this longer trip on breeding (dam a half-sister to

Order of St George) and looks sure to go on improving, in the right hands to do so.

Of the remainder, **Blown By Wind** and **Certain Lad** are both useful colts in their own right, though their limitations at this level have been rather exposed, and of more interest is recent Salisbury winner **Forseti**. Fourth on his debut at Newbury, he showed a good attitude to make all last time, finding extra when joined in the final furlong, and should have more to offer if settling better in the early stages here.

To sum up, Quorto commands respect such was the impression he created here on debut, but preference is for **Urban Icon**. He needed just a hands-and-heels ride to defy a penalty and maintain his unbeaten record last time, and has the Timeform large 'P' to his name, which denotes that he should prove capable of much better.

Timeform Ratings (weight adjusted)	
SERGEI PROKOFIEV	122p
LAND FORCE	117
BLOWN BY WIND	113
QUORTO	112p
URBAN ICON	111P

Selection	Bet now
URBAN ICON	

Superlative Stakes - Past Winners

Year	Winner	Age	Sex	Trainer	Jockey	Runs
2017	Gustav Klimt	2-9-1	5/6f	Aidan O'Brien	Ryan Moore	10 ran
2016	Boynton	2-9-1	7/1	Charlie Appleby	Adam Kirby	9 ran
2015	Birchwood	2-9-1	7/1	Richard Fahey	James Doyle	8 ran
2014	Estidhkaar	2-9-1	15/8f	Richard Hannon	Paul Hanagan	8 ran
2013	Good Old Boy Lukey	2-9-0	7/2	Richard Fahey	Ryan Moore	8 ran

Above The Rest (no.8) finished best of all to win the Bunbury Cup 12 months ago



Bunbury Cup

The Bunbury Cup on Saturday is one of the big betting races in the British Flat calendar and will feature around 20 runners over the seven-furlong track on Newmarket's July course. Rather amazingly, the James Bethell-trained Mine won this race three times in five years earlier this century, aged eight on the final occasion, but no horse has won more than one renewal since...

The George Scott-trained **Gilgamesh** is the current ante-post favourite and it is easy to see why, the four-year-old having shaped well over an insufficient trip when seventh in the Wokingham Stakes at Royal Ascot last time. The return to seven furlongs will be in his favour here and he remains with potential from a mark just 4 lb higher than when winning at York the time before.

Firmament and **Mukalal** finished mid-field in the Royal Hunt Cup at Royal Ascot last time, but both those runs shouldn't be taken at face value. The former travelled better than most

before meeting traffic over two furlongs out, and again did enough to suggest that most, if not all, of his ability remains intact; he's lurking on a good mark. Mukalal refused to settle early in the race, but made good headway over a furlong out before his earlier exertions told in the closing stages. The drop back to seven furlongs may benefit him in the short term and he remains a potential improver.

Mubtasim was gelded after his final start in 2017 and has looked an improved performer this season, producing a career-best when runner-up sporting a first-time hood in a listed

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race at Haydock last time. He makes his belated handicap debut now, and this mark shouldn't be beyond him judged on the pick of his form.

Closely-related to the high-class Al Kazeem, **Makzeem** has failed to trouble the judge in two starts in listed company so far this season, but proved he can be competitive from this mark when hitting the frame in the Challenge Cup at Ascot on his final 2017 start. He returns from a short break with the booking of Ryan Moore catching the eye here, and it would be no surprise to see him bounce back.

One who arrives at the top of his game is **Aces**, who has won two of his three starts since joining Ian Williams. He followed up from an 8 lb higher mark than at Epsom over C&D last time, giving the impression that he still hasn't shown all that he is capable of just yet; another bold bid is expected despite him being burdened with a 6 lb penalty.

Top-weight **Speculative Bid** missed 2016 but came back as good as ever last year, winning at Doncaster (by a neck from **Shady McCoy**) in taking style, held up in rear travelling powerfully before weaving his way through to lead close home. He wasn't in the same form when last seen at Deauville in December, but he has an excellent record in races like this, and has gone well fresh in the past.

Both **Louie de Palma** and **Spanish City** aren't guaranteed a run as yet, but would have claims if taking their chance. The former is very lightly-raced for a six-year-old and is starting to show why connections have persevered with him, showing the benefit of his return (after 1381 days off) when second over six furlongs at Windsor last time. Spanish City appeared to have no excuses when only fourth on his most recent outing at York, but his earlier form is proving strong, and it's plausible that he could still have more to offer, too.

In summary, a case can be made for several here, but at the time of writing it is **Mukalal** who makes the most appeal. He was progressive last season, and shaped better than the bare result on his return at Royal Ascot last month. Gilgamesh and Firmament complete the shortlist.

Timeform Ratings (weight adjusted)

FIRMAMENT	127
WAHASH	126
LOUIE DE PALMA	123
MAKZEEM	123
SHADY MCCOY	123

Selection

Bet now

MUKALAL

Bunbury Cup - Past Winners

2017	Above The Rest	6-9-1	12/1	David Barron	Clifford Lee	18 ran
2016	Golden Steps	5-9-0	7/1	Marco Botti	Frankie Dettori	16 ran
2015	Rene Mathis	5-9-1	16/1	Richard Fahey	Paul Hanagan	17 ran
2014	Heaven's Guest	4-9-3	12/1	Richard Fahey	Tony Hamilton	13 ran
2013	Field of Dream	6-9-7	14/1	Jamie Osborne	Adam Kirby	19 ran

Harry Angel won last year's July Cup in what was the smallest field for the race since 2000



July Cup

The Group 1 Darley July Cup on Saturday is one of Britain's most valuable and prestigious sprints, and many of the winners of the six-furlong sprint have gone on to be crowned Timeform's champion sprinter in Europe, including Muhaarar in 2015. It also traditionally brings together the best of the three-year-old sprinters with their older counterparts and this year's renewal is no different—we should be in for a cracking race...

The favourite at the time of writing is a member of the older generation in the shape of Godolphin's **Blue Point**. He was a very smart three-year-old himself in 2017, winning the Pavilion Stakes and the Bengough Stakes, both at Ascot, either side of a creditable third behind Caravaggio and Harry Angel in the Commonwealth Cup. Better than ever when winning the King's Stand Stakes on his return to Royal Ascot (by one and three-quarter lengths from Battaash) last time,

he should take all the beating if arriving in the same sort of form, with the return to six furlongs unlikely to inconvenience him.

The Commonwealth Cup looks the obvious place to start when assessing the three-year-old challenge, with Muhaarar and Harry Angel both having contested that race before tasting victory here in recent years. Having promised much on his first two starts this season, **Eqtidaar** produced a career best to get the verdict (by half a length from **Sands of Mali**)

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at Ascot, holding on gamely having hit the front soon enough. He needs to improve again to make a significant impact in these all-aged Group 1s, but that is entirely possible given his lightly-raced profile. Sands of Mali ran right up to his best in second, again impressing with how well he travelled, and might have given the winner even more to think about had they raced closer together in the closing stages. **Invincible Army**, on the other hand, posted a rare below-par effort in ninth, but he is closely-matched with Sands of Mali on earlier form and cannot be discounted if bouncing back.

Sioux Nation also disappointed when sent off favourite for the Commonwealth Cup, and instead it could be his stablemate **U S Navy Flag** who emerges as the pick of the Aidan O'Brien-trained runners here. He recorded back-to-back Group 1 wins in the Middle Park Stakes and the Dewhurst Stakes in the second half of last season, and drops back to six furlongs for the first time since the Middle Park here. That looks a wise decision with the son of War Front having done too much too soon over a mile of late, and he must be respected if returning to his very smart best. O'Brien is responsible for 10 of the 18 entries in total, with recent listed winner **Fleet Review** perhaps the pick of the remainder.

The Henry Candy-trained **Limato** won this race in 2016 before finishing second behind Harry Angel 12 months ago, but has something to prove here, having failed to sparkle in two starts

so far this term (beaten before the longer trip could become an issue last time). **Brando** was just half a length behind Limato when third 12 months ago, and it would be no surprise to see him mount a bold bid, while similar comments also apply to **Redkirk Warrior**, a dual Group 1 winner in Australia who is clearly better than he was able to show when well held in the Diamond Jubilee Stakes at Royal Ascot last time.

Dreamfield is a fascinating contender having only narrowly failed to land a huge gamble in the Wokingham Stakes at Royal Ascot last time. He could still have more to offer after just four starts, though he will need to if he is to trouble the same connections' **Blue Point**; the older horses have the edge on form and, with defending champion and fellow Godolphin star Harry Angel ruled out, he rates the clear one to beat.

Timeform Ratings (weight adjusted)

BLUE POINT	137
REDKIRK WARRIOR	133
BRANDO	131
LIMATO	130?
EQTIDAAR	129p

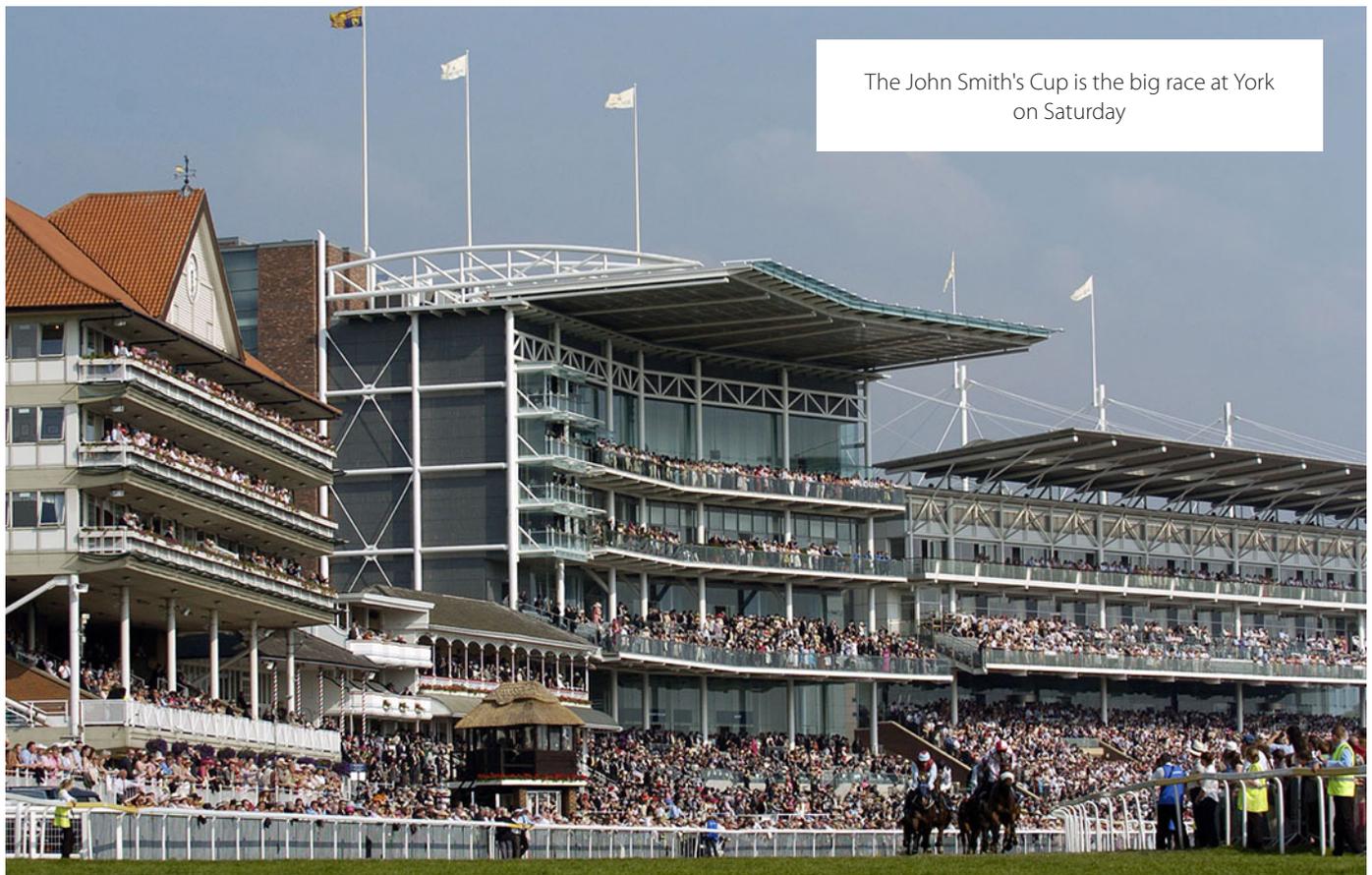
Selection

Bet now

BLUE POINT

July Cup - Past Winners

2017	Harry Angel	3-9-0	9/2	Clive Cox	Adam Kirby	10 ran
2016	Limato	4-9-6	9/2	Henry Candy	Harry Bentley	18 ran
2015	Muhaarar	3-9-0	2/1f	Charles Hills	Paul Hanagan	14 ran
2014	Slade Power	5-9-6	7/4f	Edward Lynam	Wayne Lordan	13 ran
2013	Lethal Force	4-9-5	9/2	Clive Cox	Adam Kirby	11 ran



The John Smith's Cup is the big race at York on Saturday

John Smith's Cup

The John Smith's Cup is the richest middle-distance handicap in Britain and the feature race of one of the busiest meetings of the entire season at York, with 32,262 people descending upon the Knavesmire 12 months ago. There is likely to be a similarly healthy turnout for this year's renewal, and Yorkshire racegoers could well be cheering on one of their own, with Skipton-born trainer William Haggas appearing to hold a strong hand as he seeks a third win in the race...

Haggas is responsible for three entries at the time of writing, the pick of which appear to be **Across Dubai** and **Seniority**. The former won each of his first three starts and proved as good as ever when third at Chelmsford last time, beaten just a neck. He can race from the same mark here and remains one to be positive about for these high-end handicaps. Seniority, on the other hand, failed to justify favouritism in the Royal Hunt Cup at Royal Ascot last time, but he

travelled well for a long way and was perhaps undone by racing away from the main action; he looks sure to run well back up in trip, already set to race from 2 lb higher in future handicaps.

Afaak, **What's The Story**, and **Kynren** also contested the Royal Hunt Cup on their most recent starts, with the former coming out best in second. He could have even more to offer over this longer trip and has to be high on any shortlist, while What's The Story is equally

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effective over this distance and can race from a 2 lb lower mark than when fourth at Ascot. Kynren, who signed off with a hat-trick in 2017, has progressed again without winning this season, but appeared to find the ground firmer than ideal when well held at Ascot and it could be a similar story here (also has stamina to prove).

The favourite at the time of writing is the David Elsworth-trained **Dash of Spice**, who has improved with racing this season, culminating with a dominant victory in the Duke of Edinburgh Stakes at Royal Ascot (by two and a quarter lengths from **Sir Chauvelin**) last time. That effort marked him out as a pattern performer in the making and, though the drop back in trip is a slight concern here, he is undoubtedly well ahead of his mark under a 5 lb penalty. **Appeared** was four lengths back in fourth on that occasion and looks in the handicapper's grip at present.

Thundering Blue can be forgiven a below-par effort in the same race, having raced far too freely through the first half of the contest. A winner over this C&D in May, the drop back in trip will be in his favour here and he has definite each-way claims judged on the pick of his form. **Chelkar** could also be suited by dropping in distance, for all that he didn't appear to lack for stamina when fourth in the Ascot Stakes last time. All of his runs for previous connections in France came at around this trip, and he certainly

showed enough at the Royal meeting to suggest he is on a good mark for his powerful yard.

Others to note include **Another Touch** and **Brorocco**. The former is now 3 lb lower than when eighth in this race (beaten just three lengths) 12 months ago, while hold-up performer Brorocco has been running well of late and could easily have a race like this in him when everything falls right.

In summary, this looks a typically competitive renewal but, at the prices, it could pay to take a chance on **Across Dubai**. He was beaten just a neck by a subsequent winner last time and continues to leave the impression he will be well suited by the demands of a race of this nature. Dash of Spice and Afaak are a couple of others to be interested in.

Timeform Ratings (weight adjusted)

DASH OF SPICE	127p
SENIORITY	126
AFAAK	125
PIVOINE	124
ANOTHER TOUCH	123

Selection

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2017	Ballet Concerto	4-9-3	8/1	Sir Michael Stoute	James Doyle	20 ran
2016	Educate	7-9-8	18/1	Ismail Mohammed	Thomas Brown	19 ran
2015	Master Carpenter	4-9-4	14/1	Rod Millman	Phillip Makin	17 ran
2014	Farraaj	5-9-11	6/1	Roger Varian	Andrea Atzeni	16 ran
2013	Danchai	4-8-11	10/1	William Haggas	Andrea Atzeni	19 ran

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ZAAKI – 15:00 Newmarket, Friday 13th July

Sir Michael Stoute

Timeform rating (111p) Zaaki had run to a borderline smart level when placed in a handicap at Chelmsford in May, but it was still significant that he was allowed to take his chance in the Hampton Court Stakes at Royal Ascot last time. He very much caught the eye when third on that occasion, too, enduring trouble in-running in the straight and never nearer than at the finish, given just a couple of slaps inside the final furlong. He isn't long with a top yard and remains with potential, clearly up to competing in pattern races but well treated enough on a BHA mark of 104 to suggest he can take a serious hand in the finish here.

ELGIN – 16:45 Newmarket, Friday 13th July

Alan King

Timeform rating (107p) Elgin has been given an opening mark of 98, but that could underestimate him, by some margin too, given he's in the premier league of hurdlers (won a pair of big handicaps in 2017/18), and he wasn't extended at all to pick off the high-80s Saroog, giving him 7 lb, when winning a minor event at Catterick last time. The runner-up has done his bit for the form since (winning twice, including a handicap) and Elgin looks sure take plenty of beating up in trip here, with the potential to make his presence felt in even deeper contests than this before the year is out. Hamada is another who could have more to offer in a warm heat despite the small field.

CORROSIVE – 17:20 Newmarket, Friday 13th July

Hugo Palmer

Timeform rating (99p) Corrosive ran respectably when tenth in the Britannia Stakes at Royal Ascot last time (beaten less than lengths), unable to maintain his run-to-run progress in such a competitive race, but leaving the impression he could well get back on the up when returned to calmer waters. The concluding heat at Newmarket on Friday provides just the opportunity that trainer Hugo Palmer would have been looking for and it would be no surprise to see Corrosive make it three wins from four starts this season, top on weight-adjusted ratings and with James Doyle taking over in the saddle. The unexposed Court of Justice looks best of the rest.

GEORGE OF HEARTS – 15:20 Newmarket, Saturday 14th July

Richard Hughes

Timeform rating (103p) The Britannia could also hold the key to Saturday's 1m handicap at Newmarket, with George of Hearts well worth another chance to prove himself on a fair mark, having not been given the chance to show it at the Royal meeting—he was simply left with too much to do that day and did well under the circumstances to finish as close as he did (four and a quarter lengths back in ninth). His earlier form is working out well (made the Jersey Stakes runner-up Society Power work on his penultimate start) and he certainly showed enough last time to suggest that this trip is within his range, with the prospect of more to come given his lightly-raced profile.

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