

Charlie Swan's Cheltenham Day 1 Preview

13:20 – [Supreme Novices' Hurdle](#)

This is a very good race, and you could see many of these horses turning up in the Champion Hurdle next year. I actually had Old Park Star as a foal, so it would be great to see him win this. He is an easy enough ride; you can make the running or ride him handy. He does jump well and a lot will come down to jumping in this race. Last time out at Haydock, he was doing 34mph between the second last and the last on testing ground, so I'd say that was some performance from him. I do fancy him here.



Mighty Park looks a really good horse, but he's a bit of an unknown as we don't know how good he is. Willie [Mullins] and David [Casey] think he's very good, but I was hoping that he would run in the Turners as it might give him more of a chance over two-miles-five-furlongs with his limited jumping experience. You have to jump very quickly in this race. Talk The Talk is a good horse, as is El Cairos, but both have shown this season that they can make jumping mistakes. I do think El Cairos could be the biggest danger to Old Park Star though. If you're looking one at an each-way price then maybe Leader D'Allier could be one, as I know the yard fancy him to run well.

Selection: [Old Park Star](#)

Each Way: [Leader D'Allier](#)

[BACK TO CONTENT HUB](#)

14:00 – [Arkle Novices' Chase](#)

Kopek Des Bordes has only had one run over fences, so you're taking plenty on trust with him. Having said that he has been to two racecourse gallops at Punchestown and Fairyhouse, and the word was he jumped well. That's nearly like having another two runs under his belt.

I know Lulamba is unbeaten but it's a little bit hard to know what he has been coming up against in his races. I thought he was in trouble for a few strides at Newbury last time but then he stayed on really well. I do feel Kopek Des Bordes might have more speed than him over this trip. Lulamba did get beaten by Poniros in the Triumph last year, so Kopek Des Bordes might even be a better horse than him over hurdles.

Kargese has won around Cheltenham before and can definitely be there or thereabouts.

If you were to nail my colours to the mast, I'd probably say Kopek Des Bordes is the best horse in the race and I'd bank on him here.



Selection: [Kopek Des Bordes](#)

[BACK TO CONTENT HUB](#)

14:40 – [Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle](#)

There are a lot with chances in this. JP [McManus] has three runners – Saratoga, Manlaga and Mustang Du Breuil – and I think all three of them have really good prospects. I do like Manlaga and Mustang Du Breuil. Nicky [Henderson] was thinking of running one of them in the Triumph, and I thought if he thinks he is good enough to win the Triumph, then they are probably well enough handicapped to win this. Coming from France, they have so much experience already, as they do so much jumping with them, and that will stand them in good stead in a race like this. I liked the way Manlaga did it last time at Haydock, in what was a slowly run race, and I would definitely give Mustang Du Breuil a chance as he looks a very good each-way price.



With Saratoga, I would just be a little bit worried about his jumping and whether he has enough experience for a race like this. I would say the biggest danger to JP's three is probably Winston Junior, with Jack Kennedy riding, as he looks a horse that is going the right way.

Selection: [Malanga](#)

Each Way: [Mustang Du Breuil](#)

[BACK TO CONTENT HUB](#)

15:20 – [Ultima Handicap Chase](#)

Jagwar and Iroko are two nice horses for JP in this race. Jagwar has been a little bit unlucky this season, as he could have won either of his races. Iroko is probably a Gold Cup-type horse running in a handicap. I wouldn't say there's a lot between them, but on this occasion I'd probably just side with Jagwar.



Handstands looks to have a chance. I actually bought Quebecois as a foal, and I think he could be quite well handicapped too. Anthony Honeyball's Leave Of Absence has run some nice races this season, including when winning over this course and distance in October. He might be my idea of a nice each-way bet.

Selection: [Jagwar](#)

Each Way: [Leave Of Absence](#)

[BACK TO CONTENT HUB](#)

16:00 – [Champion Hurdle](#)

This looks a three-horse race between The New Lion, Lossiemouth and Brighterdaysahead, and you could see any of them winning. Obviously, I'd like to see The New Lion win for JP. He's a little bit of an unknown, because of what has happened in his two races this season. I thought he would have gone close in the Fighting Fifth at Newcastle when he fell. Then with Sir Gino pulling up last time, it meant it wasn't much of a race, but I thought he did well to win there, considering they went no gallop. He definitely has a big chance.



Brighterdaysahead is a very good mare, and I think she's been a little bit unlucky at Cheltenham, rather than her not liking it there. When she got beaten in the Mares' Novices' Hurdle, Jack [Kennedy] would probably be the first to say that he should have gone on and made the running on her as they crawled, which didn't suit her. Last year, she probably wasn't 100 percent right when she disappointed in this race. Golden Ace is a good mare, but she's had two very lucky wins. You can't take those away from her, but I'm just not sure she's up to the standard of the first three in the betting.

Selection: [The New Lion](#)

[BACK TO CONTENT HUB](#)

16:40 – [Plate Handicap Chase](#)

McLaurey has had three runs over two miles this season and you would think the step up in trip here should suit him. You'd just be a little worried about his jumping, as he can be a bit careful at his fences, especially in a handicap against exposed horses that have plenty of experience.

If Down Memory Lane came back to his best, then you would have to give him a chance too. He is a good horse, but he's a hard horse to keep right.



Downmexicoway is another that is of interest. Henry's [de Bromhead] horses have been running a bit in and out all season, but he seems to be able to get them back to form for Cheltenham. He might be one to side with each-way.

Selection: [McLaurey](#)

Each Way: [Downmexicoway](#)

[BACK TO CONTENT HUB](#)

17:20 – [National Hunt Novices' Chase](#)

It's an open looking race. You always have to respect Emmet Mullins' runners as he's very good at getting them ready for the big day. Backmersackme won a big handicap at the Dublin Racing Festival, and he definitely looks to have his chance once again.

Rebecca Curtis' Newton Tornado could be his biggest danger. The yard seem to fancy him, and they of course won this race last year with Haiti Couleurs. Others with chances include Paul Nolan's Iceberg Theory and Faye Bramley's Walking On Air, who I think will be suited to this trip and he looks a good each-way price.



Selection: [Backmersackme](#)

Each Way: [Waking On Air](#)

[BACK TO CONTENT HUB](#)

Best of luck!

Charlie