Bahrain International Trophy Runners Guide

1 CALIF (Abdulla Fawzi Nass/ Benoit De La Sayette)

Seven-year-old who finished 3rd in this race in 2024 and 6th in this race last season when beaten just under 8 lengths by Royal Champion. He has run five times since including when winning a listed race over 2200m in February when held up in rear. 3rd of 6 when last seen over this CD when beaten nearly four lengths by the reopposing Hi Royal in the Bahrain Gold Cup and needs to show improved form with an official rating of 106. He will no doubt be dropped from his wide draw in Stall 10.

2 GALEN (Joseph O'Brien/ Dylan Browne McMonagle)

Last year's runner-up who comes into the race off the back of a victory at Goodwood last time. The five-year-old was beaten less than a length in this contest last season by Royal Champion but was poor behind that rival in Riyadh in the Neom Turf Cup on his next start. He bounced back to finish 4th in the Wolferton Stakes at Royal Ascot before beating Boiling Point by a neck in a conditions race when last seen. He is one of a few pace angles in this race and should be able to attack from Stall 2.

3 HI ROYAL (Ali Abdulmajeed/ David Probert)

Consistent six-year-old who has shown good form on his previous six starts in Bahrain. He won a handicap here in January, was 4th behind Phantom Flight in a listed race before finishing 3rd in the Group 3 Prince's Cup in January. He was then 2nd in a listed race over a 1600m here in April when beaten less than a length on his final start for Kevin Ryan before winning on his stable debut for Ali Abdulmajeed in the Bahrain Gold Cup by 2 ½ lengths when the reopposing Calif was back in 3rd.

4 **LAMBOURN (Aidan O'Brien/ Ryan Moore)**

Dual Derby winner last season and then beat Bay City Roller on his reappearance at Chester when ridden aggressively over this 2000m trip. He lost his way somewhat in the middle of the season but ran better than market expectations when 4th in the King George at Ascot at 50/1. The form of that race has been boosted since with the winner Kalpana following up in the Yorkshire Oaks, the runner-up Calandagan finishing 2nd in the Champion Stakes at Ascot, Benvenuto Cellini was 3rd and went on to win the Breeders' Cup Turf. Goliath was 5th who went on to win a German Group 1 on his next start and Minnie Hauk was 8th and she won the Filly & Mares race on Champion's Day at Ascot. He does need to bounce back from a disappointing run in the Irish Champion Stakes last time but should be suited by the strongly run 2000m trip.

5 **MILITARY ORDER (Charlie Appleby/ William Buick)**

Last year's 3rd who was only beaten 1 ¼ lengths by Royal Champion when ridden from off the pace. The Godolphin six-year-old has only been seen once since when he beat Geryon by 9 ½ lengths at Dundalk in a listed race over this 2000m trip but was impressive that day. He is now fitted with first-time cheekpieces which gives the impression that he will be ridden more prominently than in this race last year from Stall 5.

6 PHINEAS (Andre & Lavinia Fabre/ Maxime Guyon)

Four-year-old who won his first four starts since being gelded by over 2 ½ lengths in France at listed and Group 3 level. He was sent off favourite for the Prix Dollar when last seen but could only finish 6th behind the likes of Wimbledon Hawkeye, Zaydann and Seagulls Eleven who re-oppose in this contest. He was too keen in the early stages and didn't get the clearest of runs at a crucial stage but needs to bounce back here.

7 **ROYAL CHAMPION (Karl Burke/ Clifford Lee)**

Last year's winner who beat Galen by ¾ length before winning the Neom Turf Cup at Riyadh in February. He ran well to finish 4th behind Romantic Warrior in the QEII Cup at Sha Tin in April but finished weakly when trying to defend his crown in the York Stakes in July. It is a slight concern that we haven't seen him for 111 days since that run but defending his crown has likely been a long-term target.

8 SALLAAL (Ed Crisford/ Oisin Murphy)

Progressive four-year-old for Roger Varian this season who won a handicap at Epsom on Oaks day in impressive style before winning a listed race at Sandown and the Group 3 Rose Of Lancaster Stakes at Haydock. All three of those victories have come over this 2000m trip with the previous two coming on good ground. He can take a keen hold in his races so it is a slight concern that his regular hood is taken off for this race and it is his first run since moving to Ed Crisford and will be ridden by Oisin Murphy for the first time since his retainer for ARM Racing. He is drawn widest of all in Stall 13.

9 SEAGULLS ELEVEN (Hugo Palmer/ James Doyle)

Four-year-old who showed a good attitude to beat Persica by a nose in the Group 3 Diomed Stakes at Epsom on Oaks day. He was 3rd beaten less than a length at Longchamp in the Prix Dollar behind Wimbledon Hawkeye and Zaydann on his first start over 2000m last time when ridden prominently. He will be ridden by James Doyle for the first time in this contest and is drawn to go forward from Stall 1.

10 WIMBLEDON HAWKEYE (George Scott/ Christophe Soumillon)

Was a smart horse for James Owen and The Gredley family but has taken his form to another level since being purchased by Victorious Forever and transferred to George Scott. He was slightly unlucky when a nose 2nd in the Irish Champion Stakes on his penultimate start before winning the Group 2 Prix Dollar last time when beating the reopposing Zaydann, Seagulls Eleven and Phineas. He is often held up in midfield so he might need a bit of luck in running but should hold strong claims.

11 ZAYDANN (Francis- Henri Graffard/ Mickael Barzalona)

Four-year-old who has gradually progressed from winning a listed race at Bordeaux to winning a Group 3 at Vichy in France. He was 5th beaten 7 lengths behind Item in the Juddmonte International before finishing 2nd beaten only ½ length by Wimbledon Hawkeye in the Prix Dollar last time. Can be slowly away in his races which isn't ideal at this track.

12 **BAROUD (Andre & Lavinia Fabre/ Pierre Charles Boudot)**

Lightly raced 3yo Frankel colt who won the Group 2 Prix Guillaume D'Ornano last time by two lengths under this rider. He was slowly away last time but stayed on well over this 2000m trip and is respected given his rating of 115 and in receipt of weight from his elders.

13 GLACIUS (Hugo Palmer/ Billy Loughnane)

Three-year-old who was 3rd behind the reopposing Sallaal in the Gala Stakes at Sandown in July before winning the Saratoga Derby when making all. He was 2nd at Kentucky Downs last time when adopting the same tactics and gets the assistance of Billy Loughnane in this race. The cheekpieces that he has worn on his previous two starts are on once again.

STEVE RYDER'S BIG-RACE VERDICT

This is the first running of the Bahrain International Trophy as a Group One, and it has attracted a strong field of 13. Spirit Dancer won the race in 2023 and 2024. Last year's winner Royal Champion is trying to follow him by defending his crown. He beat the re-opposing trio of Galen, Military Order and Calif last year, but his preparation this season has been interrupted and he needs to bounce back from a below-par run at York.

Wimbledon Hawkeye has gone to a new level since moving to George Scott. He beat Zaydann, Seagulls Eleven and Phineas in good style in the Prix Dollar and holds strong claims.
Sallaal beat Glacius in the Gala Stakes at Sandown before Glacius went on to win at Saratoga. The worry with Sallaal is that his regular hood comes off for his first start for Ed Crisford, and he can race keenly.

At the prices, the preference is for **LAMBOURN**. Last year's dual Derby winner beat Bay City Roller at Chester on his reappearance. His 50-1 fourth in the King George has worked out superbly: the winner Kalpana took the Yorkshire Oaks, Calandagan was second in the Champion Stakes and Benvenuto Cellini won the Breeders' Cup Turf. Behind him, Goliath won a German Group One and even the eighth, Minnie Hauk, won the Fillies & Mares Stakes on Champions Day. If he can reproduce either his Chester run or his King George form, he can outrun his odds. With Ryan Moore on board, he can give Aidan O'Brien a record-extending 29th Group or Grade One winner of the season.