ROYAL ASCOT

DAY 2 PREVIEW

WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE

RACE 1

THE QUEEN MARY STAKES (GROUP 2)
5F

PRIZE MONEY
£150,000

RACE 2

THE QUEEN'S VASE (GROUP 2)
1M 6F 34Y

PRIZE MONEY
£265,000

RACE 3

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE STAKES (GROUP 2)
7F 213Y

PRIZE MONEY
£225,000

RACE 4

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S STAKES (GROUP 1)
1M 1F 212Y

PRIZE MONEY
£1,000,000

RACE 5

THE ROYAL HUNT CUP (HERITAGE HANDICAP)
1M (STR)

PRIZE MONEY
£175,000

RACE 6

THE KENSINGTON PALACE STAKES (HANDICAP)
1M (STR)

PRIZE MONEY
£110,000

RACE 7

THE WINDSOR CASTLE STAKES (LISTED)
5F

PRIZE MONEY
£110,000

CONTENTS

PRINCE OF WALES'S STAKES

RUNNER BY RUNNER GUIDE

BY TOM COLLINS

'Send your best middle-distance older horses to the Prince Of Wales's Stakes for your chance to compete for an incredible £1million prize pot!' That's about as much marketing as Ascot needs to promote a race of this nature. Wednesday's Group 1 showpiece, which is one of the featured contests during Royal Ascot, can be watched live on Sky Sports Racing at 4.20pm. An intriguing nine-strong field will head to post, so let's take a look at the runners.

1. ANMAAT

Jockey: Jim Crowley | Trainer: Owen Burrows

Shadwell's leading performer bids to add a third Group 1 success to his tally. Perhaps he should have already achieved such a feat in the Tattersalls Gold Cup last month given how easily he appeared on scene with a furlong to run, but fitness seemed to take its toll, something that shouldn't affect his performance here. Quick ground may not be ideal but three victories on good-to-firm surfaces indicate he's versatile enough to handle it.

2. CERTAIN LAD

Jockey: George Bass | Trainer: Jack Channon

No horse over the age of six has won the Prince Of Wales's Stakes since the race distance was shortened in 1940, so nine-year-old Certain Lad doesn't exactly fit the trend. He also falls short in the form department with his highest-profile victories coming at Group 3 level. That being said, his participation could be key due to his front-running style in a race that would be otherwise dictated by Ballydoyle's duo.

3. CONTINUOUS

Jockey: Wayne Lordan | Trainer: Aidan O'Brien

Talking of front-running race styles, Continuous knows nothing else at this stage of his career. The 2023 St Leger winner has been redeveloped into a pacemaker for Los Angeles this season, which seems like a masterful move judged on his stablemate's results. He's never the sharpest away from the stalls but he quickly finds his stride. The likelihood is that he will set a fast tempo to try to put extra emphasis on stamina.

4. FACTEUR CHEVAL

Jockey: Flavien Prat | Trainer: Jerome Reynier

A globetrotting miler who returned to grass in the Dubai Turf last time out after switching to dirt for two Middle-Eastern engagements in the winter. He has twice finished second in Ascot Group 1s, albeit both on soft ground on Champions Day, so we know he has the required talent when he's at his best. However, this trip will ultimately stretch his stamina and it's unlikely that his tough early-season exploits will have a positive effect.

ST JAMES'S PALACE STAKES
RUNNER BY RUNNER GUIDE

5. LOS ANGELES

Jockey: Ryan Moore | Trainer: Aidan O'Brien

Leading the way with three Group 1 scores is Los Angeles, a son of Camelot who has been extremely well placed by his connections. A long-striding horse with admirable guts, Los Angeles is sure to be forwardly-placed in a bid to outstay and outbattle his counterparts. His recent effort at the Curragh was widely considered to be a career-best, but another step forward could be required for further glory. He's not flashy but he is resolute.

6. MAP OF STARS

Jockey: James Doyle | Trainer: Francis-Henri Graffard

France went through a sparkling patch in this race between 2007 and 2010, winning three of the four renewals, but they haven't won it since. Can Map Of Stars end the drought? His recent Prix Ganay effort suggests he will need to improve to do so but that's not beyond the realms of possibility given he's only had seven runs. Watch this space.

7. OMBUDSMAN

William Buick | Trainer: John & Thady Gosden

Punters got stuck into Ombudsman on his seasonal reappearance at Sandown only to be disappointed when he finished second. They can't complain, however, as he did bettors a good turn last year by racking up four straight successes. Have we seen this horse's limits or is there still room for improvement? This race will tell us all.

8. ROYAL CHAMPION

Jockey: Clifford Lee | Trainer: Karl Burke

It has been either feast or famine with this horse at Ascot. His two runs here have seen him finish 120 lengths last of nine in the 2022 Champion Stakes and then first of 16 in the 2023 Wolferton. Predicting which Royal Champion will turn up at this track is rather difficult, but even the best version of this seven-year-old is unlikely to trouble the judge against this opposition.

9. SEE THE FIRE

Jockey: Oisin Murphy | Trainer: Andrew Balding

Supplemented for £70,000, connections clearly believe this filly can justify their decision by running in the top three and consequently make a profit. Her recent York success was a clear career-best but now she tackles the boys. She was only beaten three lengths by Anmaat here in October and a similar performance could see her hit the frame. Winning isn't totally out of the equation, either.

VERDICT

The return to Ascot with race fitness on his side can see **ANMAAT** reverse the Tattersalls Gold Cup form with Los Angeles. You cannot fault the tenacity or resolve of Aidan O'Brien's market leader, but he isn't as sexy as Shadwell's middle-distance performer, whose course-and-distance victory in the Champion Stakes last October is the best piece of form on offer. See The Fire and Map Of Stars can fight out the places.

GROUP 1 STATS GUIDES

BY PAUL JONES

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

RACE 2
QUEEN'S VASE
WEDNESDAY 18TH JUNE
15:05PM (BST)

Group 2 | | Class 1 | 3YO

☑ POSITIVES:
The first four in the betting
A low draw
Trained by Aidan O'Brien or Charlie Johnston
Owned by Godolphin
Won this season

☒ NEGATIVES:
By a sire with a Stallion Index of under 10f

RACE 3
DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE STAKES
WEDNESDAY 18TH JUNE
15:40PM (BST)

Group 2 | | Class 1 | 4YO+

☑ POSITIVES:
Four-year-olds
The favourite or second-favourite
Contested the Dahlia Stakes (the winner especially)
Winning course form
Won or placed at Royal Ascot last year
Trained by John & Thady Gosden or in France
Owned by Chevelev Park Stud

☒ NEGATIVES:
Running under a Group 1 penalty
Yet to win a Group or Listed race

RACE 4
PRINCE OF WALES'S STAKES
WEDNESDAY 18TH JUNE
16:20PM (BST)

Group 1 | | Class 1 | 4YO+

☑ POSITIVES:
Last-time-out winners
Contested last season's renewal

☒ NEGATIVES:
Aged 6+
Unplaced last time out
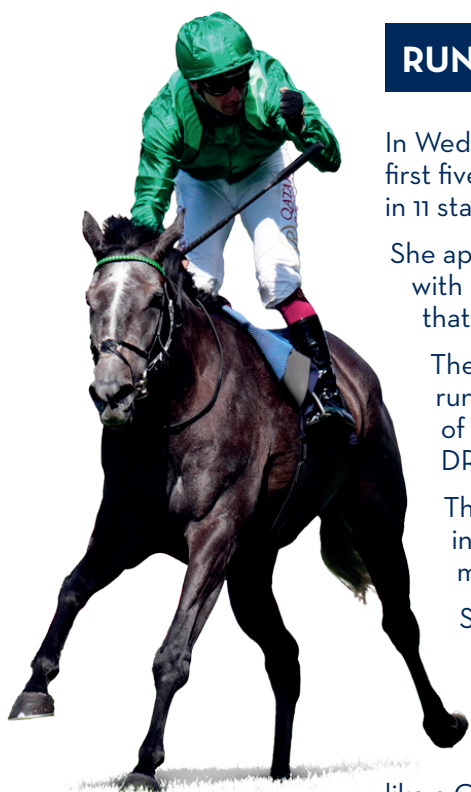Likely to start bigger than 8/1
Odds-on favourite

TOTAL PERFORMANCE DATA TIPS

BY ADAM MILLS

Adam Mills uses TPD data to nominate his two best bets on the Wednesday of Royal Ascot 2025.

TOTAL PERFORMANCE DATA

RUNNING LION | DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE STAKES

In Wednesday's Duke of Cambridge Stakes (3.40), **RUNNING LION** won four of her first five starts and whilst she did win this race 12 months ago, that was her only win in 11 starts since the explosive start to her career.

She appeared to have every chance at Haydock last time without going through with it in the closing stages. It must surely be doubtful that she is in the same form that she showed a year ago.

There are plenty of improving types in this year's race, most notably the Royal runner Rainbow's Edge and George Boughey's Soprano, but they all have a lot of improvement to find if they are going to get the better of CINDERELLA'S DREAM.

The winner of seven of her 10 starts, she won the Dahlia Stakes at Newmarket in May, recording the fastest top speed (39.86 mph), run-out speed (33.78 mph) and running the fastest final 3f splits in the field (11.38, 11.40 and 11.94s).

She was beaten in Dubai earlier this year, but the winner, Choisya, went on to win a G1 at Keeneland next time and Cinderella's Dream ran the fastest final furlong split in 11.32s and had a better run-out speed at 38.41 mph.

She can be slowly away from the stalls, which is a slight concern, but she has shown so much speed that she should be able to close late on and looks like a Group 1 Filly against Group 2 performers.

MY CLOUD | ROYAL HUNT CUP

Clearly any selection in the Royal Hunt Cup (5.00) is going to require an enormous amount of luck, but the case for **MY CLOUD** is still very strong.

An unexposed improver, he has won his last three starts, including over course and distance in April.

A winner at Newbury last time, the runner-up Boyfriend has won since to boost the form. He took 9.8s to reach 30 mph (the leader took 7.6s) but was able to recover despite the race being run at a relatively steady pace (finishing speed 106%). Making smooth headway from halfway, progress which included the fastest final 2f in 10.94 and 11.50s, he recorded the fastest run-out speed in the field at 37.33 mph.

He has recorded the longest average stride length in the field on both of his most recent starts, 25.01ft at Ascot in April and 25.10ft at Newbury last month and the likely strong pace will only help his cause.

TIMEFORM TIPS

RACE 1	1st	**TRUE LOVE** (23)
	2nd	**SPICY MARG** (21)
	3rd	**LENNILU** (11)

RACE 2	1st	**ASMARANI** (2)
	2nd	**CARMERS** (3)
	3rd	**DEVIL'S ADVOCATE** (4)

RACE 3	1st	**CINDERELLA'S DREAM** (1)
	2nd	**RUNNING LION** (6)
	3rd	**ELMALKA** (3)

RACE 4	1st	**SEE THE FIRE** (9)
	2nd	**ANMAAT** (1)
	3rd	**LOS ANGELES** (5)

RACE 5	1st	**THE LIFFEY** (14)
	2nd	**HI ROYAL** (2)
	3rd	**QIRAT** (5)

RACE 6	1st	**JULIA AUGUSTA** (5)
	2nd	**AROLLA** (3)
	3rd	**SKY SAFARI** (18)

RACE 7	1st	**ROGUE LEGEND** (17)
	2nd	**UTMOST RESPECT** (22)
	3rd	**OLD IS GOLD** (16)

Leovanni winning the Queen Mary Stakes at Royal Ascot 2024.

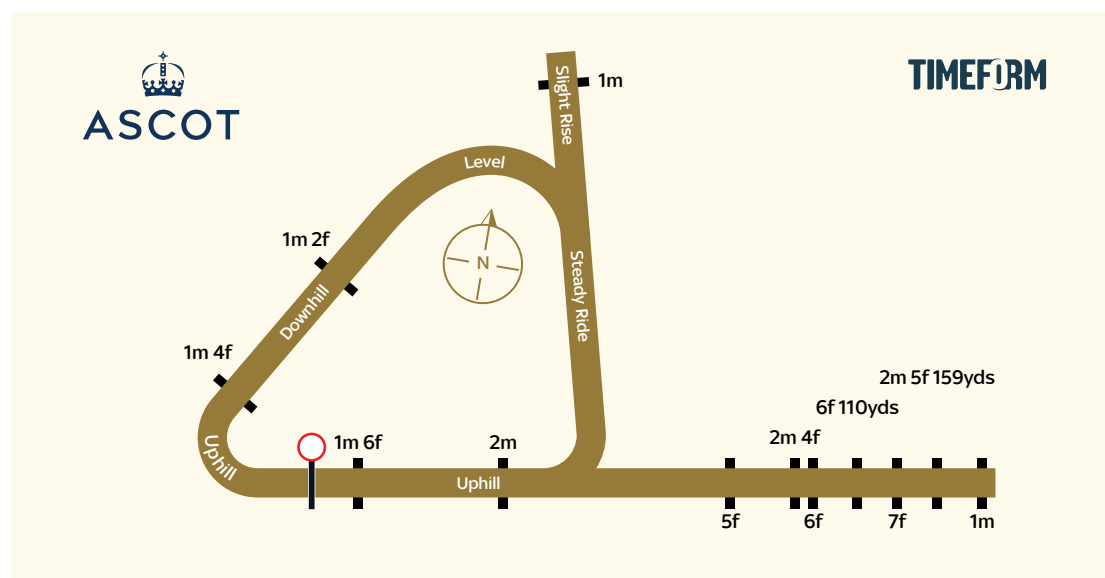Auguste Rodin winning the Prince of Wales's Stakes at Royal Ascot 2024.

Doha winning the Kensington Palace Stakes at Royal Ascot 2024.

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.
"

The round course is a right-handed, triangular circuit of fourteen furlongs, with a run in of 2½ 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.