

# EPSOM, JUNE 1&2 2018



## THE 239th RENEWAL OF THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS FLAT RACE



### FRIDAY

- 1400 (BST) Investec Woodcote EBF Stakes (1200m)
- 1435 Investec Click & Invest Mile Handicap (1700m)
- 1510 Investec Coronation Cup (Group 1) (2400m)
- 1545 Investec Wealth & Investment Handicap (2000m)
- 1630 Investec Oaks (Fillies' Group 1) (2400m)
- 1715 Investec Surrey Stakes (Listed) (3yo) (1400m)
- 1750 Investec Zebra Handicap (1400m)

Godolphin bid to land the Oaks for the first time since Kazzia struck under Frankie Dettori in 2002 with the Charlie Appleby-trained **Wild Illusion**. Wild Illusion was a shock winner of a Group 1 in France last October and is the only member of this year's line-up to have previously scored at the very highest level.

The daughter of Dubawi finished fourth on her return to action in the 1000 Guineas on good to firm ground. Conditions are likely to be considerably slower at Epsom, but that should not cause an issue - on pedigree she is better equipped for a stamina test than many of her rivals.

Appleby's fellow Newmarket trainer William Haggas saddles another filly who ought not to fail through lack of staying power. **Give And Take** won the Group 3 Musidora Stakes at York, a leading trial for this contest.

Aidan O'Brien does not have the favourite this year but is still very strongly represented with no less than five of the nine runners including Cheshire Oaks first and second, **Magic Wand** and **Forever Together**. Magic Wand came out on top by three and a half lengths at Chester but it could be much closer between them now. The latter's rider Donnacha O'Brien had to switch her twice in the short home straight and she was finishing strongly.

Lingfield Oaks Trial winner **Perfect Clarity** is unbeaten in two starts for Clive Cox and Adam Kirby. Her trainer rates the filly very highly and she seemed to handle the track well at the 'Breakfast With The Stars' event last week. "I've got enormous confidence that she's going to acquit herself well," said Cox.

### THE GBI RACING VERDICT

- 1st Forever Together
- 2nd Give And Take
- 3rd Perfect Clarity



Give And Take wins the Musidora Stakes

### STRAIGHTFORWARD TASK FOR CRACKSMAN?

Last year's brilliant Champion Stakes winner **Cracksman** ought to register a similarly emphatic success as he faces just five rivals in the Investec Coronation Cup, the other Group 1 contest on the card. He returned to action this season with a stylish victory in France in the Prix Ganay. He is likely to be a long odds-on favourite in the Group One as he returns to Epsom after finishing third in the Derby a year ago.

Cracksman's biggest test could come from Charlie Appleby's **Hawkbill**. The 2016 Eclipse winner was in fine form in Dubai, beating Poet's Word in the Sheema Classic. Aidan O'Brien's big hope is **Idaho**, a very impressive winner of the Ormonde Stakes at Chester, having run in Group 1s all over the world since claiming the Hardwicke Stakes at Royal Ascot last season. German contender **Windstoss** is the other runner proven at the top level.

# GBI RACING

# EPSOM, JUNE 1&2 2018



## THE 239th RENEWAL OF THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS FLAT RACE



### SATURDAY

- 1400 (BST) Investec Private Banking Handicap (2000m)
- 1435 Princess Elizabeth Stakes (Fillies' Group 3) (1700m)
- 1510 Investec Diomed Stakes (Group 3) (1700m)
- 1545 Investec Corporate Banking 'Dash' Handicap (1000m)
- 1630 Investec Derby (Group 1) (2400m)
- 1715 Investec Out Of The Ordinary Handicap (2400m)
- 1750 Investec Asset Management Handicap (1200m)

Recent 2000 Guineas winner **Saxon Warrior** has very obvious claims of taking a second Classic victory here in the Investec Derby. Unbeaten in three starts in 2017, adding wins in the Beresford Stakes at Naas and Racing Post Trophy at Doncaster to a maiden win at the Curragh, he retained his unbeaten record at Newmarket with a winning performance that was hard to fault.

Put simply, judged on pedigree, the formbook and his style of running, he has better chances of completing a Classic double than many 2000 Guineas winners who head on to Epsom. That's why his position at the head of the betting market is quite so clear-cut, even if he is clearly still to prove himself over this 2400m trip.

**Hazapour** is out of a half-sister to 2016 Derby winner Harzand and the Dermot Weld-trained colt put himself firmly in the Derby picture when winning the Derrinstown Trial. He took a large step forward from his juvenile form that day, delivering a hugely-impressive performance. The booking of dual Derby winner Frankie Dettori cannot be considered a negative and he could be the most likely to take advantage if the favourite fails.

**Roaring Lion** won three times over 1600m at two, and was also a neck second to Saxon Warrior in the Racing Post Trophy at Doncaster. Having always shaped like a strong stayer, he was far from discredited when fifth in the 2000 Guineas. A good winner subsequently of the Dante Stakes at York, the principal concern over his chance is temperament. By trainer John Gosden's own admission, he doesn't always have his mind on the job.

### THE GBI RACING VERDICT

- 1st Saxon Warrior
- 2nd Hazapour
- 3rd Roaring Lion



Aidan O'Brien: Trainer of Saxon Warrior

### CAN CASPIAN DO IT AGAIN?

Mick Appleby is the man responsible for **Caspian Prince's** attempt to win a fourth Investec Dash, but he knows he probably won't get too many more chances with one of the most well-travelled horses in training.

Caspian Prince has won the famous fast-and-furious 1000m handicap for Tony Carroll (2014), Dean Ivory (2016) and Tony Coyle (2017), and now it is Appleby, a man renowned for getting the best out of recruits from other yards, who is responsible for the sprinter whose owner Stephen Louch believes that the horse benefits from a very regular change of scenery.

Appleby said this week: "It's a remarkable record and he's in good order, so I'm expecting a decent run. It's the fastest five furlongs (1000m) in Britain and a real specialists' course, which is why he does so well there as he's really a four-and-a-half-furlong horse. He just seems to love it there!"

# GBI RACING