

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO

# BOXING DAY RACING 2015



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# CONTENTS

[12:50 - William Hill On Your Mobile Novices' Hurdle Race 2m](#)

[1.25 - William Hill Winter Festival Novices' Limited Handicap Chase Cl3 2m4f110y CH4](#)

[2.00 - Kauto Star Novices' Chase \(In memory of Nigel Clark\) \(formerly The Feltham Novices' Chase\) \(Grade 1\) Cl1 3m CH4](#)

[2.35 - williamhill.com Christmas Hurdle \(Grade 1\) Cl1 2m CH4](#)

[3.10 - William Hill King George VI Chase \(Grade 1\) Cl1 3m CH4](#)

[Past King George VI Chase Winners](#)

[King George VI Chase Trends](#)

[15:45 - William Hill World Darts Championship Handicap Hurdle Race 2m5f](#)

[BONUS: Wetherby Horse Racing Trends \(RUK/C4\)](#)

[1.45 - 188Bet Rowland Meyrick Handicap Chase \(Grade 3\) Cl1 3m45y CH4](#)

A huge day on Boxing Day with eight domestic horse racing fixtures, but the festive highlight as racing resumes after a three day break is the King George VI Meeting at Kempton Park.

The King George VI Chase is the featured race of the day as punters will look to get their Xmas expenses paid for – a race in recent years we've seen horse racing greats like Kauto Star, Long Run, Best Mate, Kicking King, One Man and, more recently, Silviniaco Conti, landing the prize.

We take a look at each race on the card and highlight the main trends – hopefully this will help you narrow down the fields and point you in the direction of a few winners.

## 12:50 - William Hill On Your Mobile Novices' Hurdle Race 2m

*8/8 – Had raced in the last 7 weeks*

*7/8 – Aged 4 or 5 years-old*

*7/8 – Winning distance 3 lengths or more*

*7/8 – Favourites placed in the top 3*

*7/8 – Returned 7/2 or shorter in the betting*

*6/8 – Won just once over hurdles before*

*5/8 – Winning favourites*

*5/8 – Had won a NH Flat race before*

*3/8 – Ridden by Richard Johnson*

*2/8 – Trained by Nicky Henderson*

*2/8 – Ridden by Barry Geraghty*

**The average winning SP in the last 8 runnings is 10/3.**

We get started on Boxing Day at Kempton with a Novice Hurdle race – a contest the Nicky Henderson yard have done well in recently.

The Seven Barrows yard have won the prize twice in the last 8 years and look to have another cracking chance – this year with **ALTIOR**.

This 5 year-old ticks the age trends too, and was a gutsy winner at Cheltenham last time out.

The yard has given him 41 days to get over that but that was his third win from three over hurdles and there should be more to come.

Gold Cup-winning jockey, Nico de Boinville has ridden the horse in all of his victories (4) so will also be putting his unbeaten partnership on the line.

## 1.25 - William Hill Winter Festival Novices' Limited Handicap Chase Cl3 2m4f110y CH4

*11/11 – Aged 7 or younger*  
*10/11 – Had won between 0-1 times over fences in the UK*  
*9/11 – Placed 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> last time out*  
*9/11 – Raced within the last 5 weeks*  
*7/11 – Placed favourites (1 joint)*  
*6/11 – Officially rated between 119 and 125*  
*6/11 – Carried 11-6 or more*  
*6/11 – Winning distance – 6 lengths or more*  
*6/11 – Winning favourites (1 joint)*  
*4/11 – Won by a French bred horse*  
*4/11 – Trained by Nicky Henderson*  
*3/11 – Won last time out*  
*2/11 – Ridden by Richard Johnson*  
*2/11 – Raced at Kempton last time out*

The first of the LIVE C4 races at Kempton this Boxing Day sees a competitive Novices' Handicap Chase that always attracts some promising hedge-hoppers. It's also been a decent contest for the trend lovers with plenty of key repeating stats that should help us whittle down the runners and pinpoint the horses with the best winning profiles.

Firstly, it's unlikely we'll get many horses aged 8 or older running in this Novices' race so it's no surprise that horses aged 7 or younger have won ALL of the last 11 renewals. Next up is to look for horses that had won either none or just one previous race over fences in the UK – 10 of the last 11 winners have fitted that trend.

Coming into this contest in-form is another key stat, with 9 of the last 11 winners having finished first or second in their most recent race, while it's been a fair contest for the market leader with 55% of the last 11 favourites taking the prize.

Look for horses that raced in the last five weeks, suggesting a fitter horse with a recent blow-out is a good profile to have. This again applies to 9 of the last 11 winners.

French bred horses have taken 4 of the last 11 renewals, while in terms of stables and jockeys to note then look no further than Nicky Henderson-trained runners, or Richard Johnson-ridden horses.

With all that in-mind two horses that three horses at stand out are **ANTONY, BEKKENSFIRTH** and **BUCKHORN TIMOTHY**.

Antony was a good winner at Sandown last time out at Sandown and this 5 year-old looks a real improver for the Gary Moore team.

Bekkensfirth did it well at Leicester last time out to win by 13 lengths and despite this being a step-up in grade looks a novice going in the right direction.

Finally, Buckhorn Timothy improved last time out to run second at Chepstow but that was over a bit further than today's trip and the step down in distance looks sure to suit.

## **2.00 - Kauto Star Novices' Chase (In memory of Nigel Clark) (formerly The Feltham Novices' Chase) (Grade 1) Cl1 3m CH4**

*12/12 – Placed in the top two last time out*  
*12/12 – Raced within the last 6 weeks*  
*10/12 – Won last time out*  
*9/12 – Returned 5/2 or shorter in the betting*  
*9/12 – Had won at least 2 times over fences in the UK*  
*9/12 – French (5) or Irish (4) bred*  
*9/12 – Winning distance – 3 lengths or more*  
*8/12 – Aged 6 or younger*  
*8/12 – Placed favourites*  
*8/12 – Went onto run in that season's RSA Chase (no winners)*  
*7/12 – Winning favourites*  
*6/12 – Aged 6 years-old*  
*6/12 – Had won (chase) over at least 3m before*  
*6/12 – Raced at Newbury last time out*  
*2/12 – Trained by Paul Nicholls*  
*2/12 – Trained by David Pipe*  
*2/12 – Ridden by Ruby Walsh*  
*2/12 – Ridden by Tom Scudamore*  
*2/12 – Raced at Cheltenham last time out*  
*1/12 – French trained*  
*1/12 – Went onto run in the Cheltenham Gold Cup (One winner - Coneygree 2015)*

### **Note: The 2005 running was staged at Sandown**

The second LIVE C4 race on this cracking card gives racing fans the chance to see some of the potential staying chase stars of the future, plus, can also be a good guide to horses that will run in the RSA Chase and the Cheltenham Festival later that season.

In recent years we've seen the likes of Long Run, Grands Crus and Dynaste take this prize, while 12 months ago Coneygree won this before going onto Cheltenham Gold Cup glory the following March.

If the recent trends are to be repeated then you simply must have horses that were placed first or second on your side – ALL of the last 12 winners fit in that category. Another key stat that ALL of the last 12 winners fit is

having raced in the last six weeks, so hopefully those two trends combined will put a line through some of the runners.

Coming here off the back of a victory is also key with 10 of the last 12 tasting success last time out. It's also not been the best of races for the bookmakers in recent years with 9 of the last 12 winners returning 5/2 or shorter in the betting, while over that period we've seen seven winning favourites (8 of the last 12 market leaders have been placed).

French (5) and Irish (4) bred horses are also worth keeping on side, and in terms of age then 6 year-olds hold the best record – winning 50% of the last 12 renewals.

Always look back at the previous run as 8 of the last 12 winners raced at either Cheltenham (2) or Newbury (6) last time out and six of the last 12 victors had also won a chase race over at least 3m in the past.

The Paul Nicholls and David Pipe yards have won four of the last 12 runnings between them – with the Pipe's actually landing two of the last four – therefore, anything these two power-house stables send to post should certainly be given a second glance.

So taking the trends into account then Un Temps Pour Tout will be hoping to continue the good run of the Pipe team, but the Tizzard's **NATIVE RIVER** beat that horse into second last time out and looks to be going the right way.

This 5 year-old ticks a lot of the key trends, including running at Newbury last time out. Of the rest, **SOUTHFIELD ROYALE** and **TEA FOR TWO** are others that catch the eye.

## 2.35 - williamhill.com Christmas Hurdle (Grade 1) Cl1 2m CH4

*11/13 – Raced within the last 6 weeks*

*11/13 – Had won at least 4 times over hurdles before*

*10/13 – Placed favourites*

*10/13 – Returned 11/4 or shorter in the betting*

*8/13 – Went onto run in the Champion Hurdle (Faughan (2015) only winner)*

*8/13 – Won last time out*

*7/13 – Irish trained*

*7/13 – Ran in the Fighting Fifth Hurdle last time out*

*7/13 – Went onto finish in the top 5 in the Champion Hurdle that season*

*6/13 – Had run over hurdles at Kempton before*

*6/13 – Winning favourites*

*5/13 – French bred*

*4/13 – Trained by Nicky Henderson*

*2/13 – Trained by Jonjo O'Neill*

**Note: The 2005 running was staged at Sandown  
The 2010 renewal was run on 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2011**

The Christmas Hurdle has always been considered a target race for potential Champion Hurdle contenders with 8 of the last 13 winners going onto run in that opening day Cheltenham Festival showpiece – 7 of those finished in the top five. However, only Faughan 12 months ago has done the double in recent years.

Nicky Henderson's Binocular did win this race in 2010 and 2011, but his Champion Hurdle winning year was the season before the first of his wins in this race – Henderson's Seven Barrows yard have won the race four times in the last five years.

Look for horses that raced in the last six weeks as 11 of the last 13 winners fall into that bracket, while the same amount had won at least four times previously over hurdles.

It's been another race the bookies have not had the best of time in of late with 6 of the last 13 favourites going in, while 10 of the last 13 market leaders hit the frame and also returned 11/4 or shorter in the betting.

Winning last time out is a key stat too (8 of the last 13), plus a lot of winners (7) contested the Fighting Fifth Hurdle at Newcastle (28<sup>th</sup> Nov) before heading here.

Previous Kempton experience is another plus with 46% of recent winners having raced at the Sunbury-on-Thames venue in the past, while 38% of the last 13 winners were French-bred.

So the Nicky Henderson team will be trying to land this prize yet again, but really on all known form last year's winner of this race – **FAUGHEEN** – should take all the beating.

Last season's Champion Hurdle winner suffered a shock defeat last time out at Punchestown but that was his first run over 6 months so it can be forgiven. He's got plenty in-hand on the ratings and with winning course form should be able to follow-up.

## **3.10 – William Hill King George VI Chase (Grade 1) Cl1 3m CH4**

### **Past King George VI Chase Winners**

2014 - Silviniaco Conti (15/8 fav)

2013 - Silviniaco Conti (7/2)

2012 - Long Run (15/8 fav)

2011 - Kauto Star (3/1)

2010 - Long Run (9/2)

2009 - Kauto Star (8/13 fav)

2008 – Kauto Star (10/11 fav)  
2007 – Kauto Star (4/6 fav)  
2006 – Kauto Star (8/13 fav)  
2005 – Kicking King (11/8 fav)  
2004 – Kicking King (3/1 fav)  
2003 – Edredon Bleu (25/1)  
2002 – Best Mate (11/8 fav)

**Note: The 2005 renewal was staged at Sandown Park**

## **King George VI Chase Trends**

*13/13 – Had won a Grade One chase before*  
*13/13 – French (10) or Irish bred (3)*  
*12/13 – Had raced within the last 5 weeks*  
*12/13 – Placed favourites*  
*12/13 – Finished in the top three last time out*  
*11/13 – Officially rated 169 or higher*  
*11/13 – Had won over 3m or further (fences) before*  
*10/13 – Aged 8 or younger*  
*10/13 – Had won a race over fences at Kempton before*  
*9/13 – Winning favourites*  
*8/13 – Won last time out*  
*8/13 – Aged 6 or 7 years-old*  
*8/13 – Ran in the Betfair Chase (Haydock) last time out*  
*7/13 – Won by a previous winner of the race*  
*7/13 – Trained by Paul Nicholls (9 times in all)*  
*5/13 – Ridden by Ruby Walsh*  
*2/13 – Ridden by Barry Geraghty*  
*2/13 – Ridden by Noel Fehily*  
*2/13 – Won by an Irish-based yard*

## **The average winning SP in the last 13 years is 7/2**

Onto the 'big one' and the race the 'once-a-year' festive punters try and get the bookies to pay for their turkeys. In recent years it's actually been a fairly easy way to get a few of those Christmas expenses paid for with 9 of the last 13 favourites going in.

NH fans have certainly had it good in this race and with the likes of Kauto Star reeling off a record-breaking five wins, plus Long Run and Kicking King winning the prize twice then it's been a good race for past winners. With that in mind the winner of the race for the past two seasons – Silviniaco Conti – is sure to be popular again despite his recent defeat in the Betfair Chase.



This 9 year-old will be looking to land the prize for an astonishing tenth time for his trainer Paul Nicholls, while since 2006 there has only been two winning stables of the race – Nicholls (7) and Henderson (2).

There are plenty of other key stats that should help you whittle down the runners, like ALL of the last 13 winners being a previous winner of a Grade One chase and either French or Irish bred.

12 of the last 13 victors had raced in the last five weeks, while 8 of those 13 contested the Betfair Chase at Haydock last time out. Silviniaco Conti and Cue Card will be big players based on those stats, but with them both being 9 year-olds they do fall down on the age trend – 10 of the last 13 winners were aged 8 or younger.

The last Irish-trained winner was Kicking King in 2005, but they look to have a strong-hand of improving that with the likes of Don Cossack (8 years-old) and Vautour (6 years-old) - Vautour will be hoping to follow the likes of Kauto Star, Long Run and Kicking King – who all won this race as a 6 year-old, plus he'll also be looking to give trainer Willie Mullins his second King George winner, with his last coming in 2001 with Florida Pearl. However, he's yet to win over 3m and with 11 of the last 13 having that trend on their side then he does have this negative to overcome.

It's a set-up to be a crackerjack of a race with a strong Irish presence this year, plus the rejuvenated Cue Card, but back at Kempton the value looks to sit with the winner of the last two runnings **SILVINIACO CONTI (e/w)**.

Yes, Cue Card put him in his place last time out but Paul Nicholls' 9 year-old will be better for the run and back at Kempton we think there won't be a lot between the two – especially with Cue Card having a bit to prove at the track – his last three runs at the course, and in this race, read 5-2-5. Of the Irish raiders there could be more improvement to come from Vautour being just 6 years-old, but **DON COSSACK** has impressed this term and after this impressive win in the JNWine.com Chase last time out will head here spot-on.

## 15:45 - William Hill World Darts

### Championship Handicap Hurdle Race 2m5f

*8/8 – Won no more than 3 times (UK Hurdles)*

*7/8 – Aged 6 or younger*

*7/8 – Won between 0-2 times hurdles (UK)*

*6/8 – Returned 8/1 or shorter*  
*6/8 – Placed in the top 3 last time out*  
*5/8 – Ran 4 or less weeks ago*  
*5/8 – Officially rated 120-128*  
*5/8 – Aged 5 or 6 years-old*  
*4/8 – Unplaced favourites*  
*4/8 – Won last time out*  
*4/8 – French bred*  
*3/8 – Winning favourites*  
*2/8 – Trained by Nicky Henderson*

### **The average winning SP in the last 8 runnings is 8.3/1**

Not on C4 but still some key trends to take into the race. Horses aged 6 or younger have gone well – winning 7 of the last 8 renewals, but ideally we want to look for horses that raced no more than 3 times over hurdles – and of those horses that won between 0-2 times.

Nicky Henderson has a decent record in the race so anything that stable runs should be noted.

However, the Warren Greatrex camp seem to have a good batch of horses at the moment and their **BELLS 'N' BANJOS** catches the eye.

This 5 year-old was a good winner at Fontwell last time out over a similar trip and has won on a variety of different grounds so will be fine on that score too. Yes, a 14lb rise in the ratings makes life harder, but jockey Harry Bannister takes off a handy 3lbs which helps.

## **BONUS: Wetherby Horse Racing Trends (RUK/C4)**

### **1.45 - 188Bet Rowland Meyrick Handicap Chase (Grade 3) Cl1 3m45y CH4**

*8/8 – Didn't win last time out*  
*7/8 – Unplaced in their last race*  
*7/8 – Aged 8 or younger*  
*7/8 – Had won 3 or less times over fences (UK)*  
*6/8 – Carried 11-0 or less in weight*

*6/8 – Aged 7 or 8 years-old*  
*6/8 – Raced in the last 5 weeks*  
*6/8 – Returned 9/1 or shorter in the betting*  
*5/8 – Had raced at Wetherby before*  
*5/8 – Had won over 3m (chase) before*  
*4/8 – Raced at either Haydock (2) or Aintree (2) last time out*  
*4/8 – Irish bred*  
*1/8 – Winning favourites*

**The average winning SP in the last 8 runnings is 10/1.**

Several key trends to take into this race but last year's winner DOLATULO was a pleasing third last time out at Aintree and with that run under his belt should be spot-on for this.

This Warren Greatrex 8 year-old is 7lb higher than 12 months ago, but that recent outing off this mark has shown he's improving still and with the yard going great guns at the moment then everything looks set-up for a big run. Warren Greatrex's Dolatulo also won the race 12 months ago.

Holywell is the class act in the race, but does have to give a lot of weight away and does have a bit to prove based on recent runs.

The Kerry Lee-trained TOP GAMBLE is the other to have on your side. This horse is a past course winner here and fits plenty of the key trends. He won't mind the softer ground and the talented David Noonan takes off a handy 5lbs too.