

GBI RACING

DECEMBER 2018

MONDAY

31

Warwick
Uttoxeter
LINGFIELD
Punchestown

TUESDAY

3

Plumpton
Musselburgh
WOLVERHAMPTON

4

Southwell
Fakenham
LINGFIELD

WEDNESDAY

5

Haydock
Ludlow
LINGFIELD
KEMPTON
NEWCASTLE (EVE)

THURSDAY

6

Leicester
Market Rasen
Wincanton
CHELMSFORD CITY (EVE)
Clonmel

FRIDAY

7

Sandown
Exeter
Sedgefield
KEMPTON PARK (EVE)
DUNDALK (EVE)

SATURDAY

1

Newbury
Newcastle
Doncaster
Bangor
WOLVERHAMPTON (EVE)
Fairyhouse

8

Sandown
Aintree
Wetherby
Chepstow
WOLVERHAMPTON (EVE)
Navan

SUNDAY

2

Carlisle
Leicester
Fairyhouse

9

Kelso
Huntingdon
Cork
Punchestown

10

Musselburgh
Lingfield
WOLVERHAMPTON

11

Uttoxeter
Fontwell
SOUTHWELL

12

Leicester
Hexham
LINGFIELD
KEMPTON

13

Warwick
Newcastle
Taunton
CHELMSFORD CITY (EVE)
Tramore

14

Cheltenham
Doncaster
Bangor-on-Dee
KEMPTON (EVE)
DUNDALK (EVE)

15

Cheltenham
Doncaster
Hereford
NEWCASTLE
WOLVERHAMPTON (EVE)
Fairyhouse

16

Southwell
Carlisle
Navan

17

Plumpton
Ffos Las
WOLVERHAMPTON

18

Fakenham
Catterick
SOUTHWELL
Naas

19

Newbury
Ludlow
LINGFIELD
NEWCASTLE
DUNDALK (EVE)

20

Hexham
Exeter
SOUTHWELL
CHELMSFORD CITY (EVE)

21

Ascot
Uttoxeter
SOUTHWELL
WOLVERHAMPTON (EVE)
DUNDALK (EVE)

22

Haydock
Ascot
Newcastle
LINGFIELD
Thurles

23

24

25

26

Kempton
Wetherby, Wincanton
Sedgefield, Market Rasen
Fontwell, Huntingdon
WOLVERHAMPTON
Leopardstown
Limerick, Down Royal

27

Chepstow
Kempton
Wetherby
WOLVERHAMPTON
Leopardstown
Limerick

28

Catterick
Leicester
LINGFIELD
Leopardstown
Limerick

29

Newbury
Doncaster
Kelso
SOUTHWELL
Leopardstown
Limerick

30

Haydock
Taunton
LINGFIELD

THE FEATURE RACES IN DECEMBER

SATURDAY 1

NEWBURY

LADBROKES TROPHY CHASE
LADBROKES JOHN FRANCOME NOVICES' CHASE
LADBROKES MARES' NOVICES' HURDLE
LADBROKES INTERMEDIATE GERRY FEILDEN HURDLE

NEWCASTLE

BETVICTOR FIGHTING FIFTH HURDLE

SUNDAY 2

FAIRYHOUSE

BARONERACING.COM ROYAL BOND NOVICE HURDLE
BARONERACING.COM HATTON'S GRACE HURDLE
BARONERACING.COM DRINMORE NOVICE CHASE

SATURDAY 8

SANDOWN

BETFAIR TINGLE CREEK CHASE
RANDOXHEALTH.COM HENRY VII NOVICE CHASE
JUMEIRAH HOTELS DECEMBER HANDICAP HURDLE

AINTREE

RANDOX HEALTH BECHER CHASE
REWARDS4RACING MANY CLOUDS CHASE
AINTREE GRAND SEFTON CHASE

SUNDAY 9

KELSO

PERSIMMON HOMES SCOTTISH BORDERS NATIONAL

HUNTINGDON

ADF EDREDON BLEU PETERBOROUGH CHASE

PUNCHESTOWN

JOHN DURKAN MEMORIAL PUNCHESTOWN CHASE

FRIDAY 14

CHELTENHAM

DECEMBER HANDICAP CHASE
GLENFARCLAS CROSS COUNTRY HANDICAP CHASE

SATURDAY 15

CHELTENHAM

CASPIAN CAVIAR GOLD CUP HANDICAP CHASE
UNIBET INTERNATIONAL HURDLE
ALBERT BARTLETT BRISTOL NOVICES' HURDLE
JCB TRIUMPH HURDLE TRIAL

DONCASTER

BET365 DECEMBER NOVICES' CHASE
BET365 SUMMIT JUVENILE HURDLE

SATURDAY 22

ASCOT

ASCOT HANDICAP HURDLE
JLT HURDLE
SILVER CUP HANDICAP CHASE

WEDNESDAY 26

KEMPTON

32RED KING GEORGE VI CHASE
UNIBET CHRISTMAS HURDLE
32RED KAUTO STAR NOVICES' CHASE

LEOPARDSTOWN

RACING POST NOVICES' CHASE

THURSDAY 27

CHEPSTOW

CORAL WELSH GRAND NATIONAL

FRIDAY 28

LEOPARDSTOWN

SAVILL'S STEEPLECHAS
SQUARED FINANCIAL CHRISTMAS HURDLE

SATURDAY 29

LEOPARDSTOWN

RYANAIR HURDLE

SATURDAY 1

Newbury's Ladbrokes Winter Carnival is headlined by the £250,000 Ladbrokes Trophy, formerly known as the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup and the most valuable handicap chase staged in Britain away from the Grand National itself.

During its 60-year history, the 5200m race has been won by some of the sport's most celebrated stars, including Arkle, Mill House, Burrough Hill Lad, and more recently, by Denman and Many Clouds.

Colin Tizzard, who sent out Gold Cup hero Native River to win the race two years ago, is set to have three runners this year including likely favourite Elegant Escape, although plenty of good judges fancy the Tom Lacey-trained Thomas Patrick, who finished second to Elegant Escape last time at Sandown, to reverse that form.

As well as a couple of smart hurdles contests on the same card, the Grade Two John Francome Novices' Chase (formerly the Worcester) tends to be a race worth watching, having been won in recent years by two high-class chasers trained by Tizzard, Thistlecrack (2016) and Native River (2015).

Run over just short of 4800m, the contest is usually a good pointer to the big novice prizes for the rest of the season.

The Nicky Henderson-trained Santini is likely to be a popular choice, having won three of his four starts over fences while all the time shaping as if he will far even better as a steeplechaser.

SATURDAY 1- SUNDAY 2

The two-day Winter Festival at Fairyhouse takes centre stage in Ireland, Sunday's card featuring no less than three Grade 1 contests.

The main event is the Baroneracing.com Hatton's Grace Hurdle, famously won in recent years by the likes of Limestone Lad, Hurricane Fly and Jezki.

The Gordon Elliott-trained Apple's Jade (pictured below) has been successful in this race for the last two years and the remarkable mare goes for a hat-trick of victories.



The Royal Bond Novice Hurdle over 3200m usually throws down a serious marker for championship honours later in the season, while the Drinmore Novice Chase sets a stiff challenge over 15 fences for inexperienced fencers. Unbeaten in two starts so far over fences, the Joseph O'Brien-trained Le Richebourg ought to set a stiff standard.

SATURDAY 8

Sandown Park's steeplechase course provides a thorough test of jumping, including the famous Railway fences, and the excitement of a top-class 3200m steeplechase run at an end-to-end gallop always provides a real spectacle at the Esher track. The Betfair Tingle Creek Chase, a Grade 1 event, is one of the most important races of its type and boasts an outstanding roll of honour.

Eight-year-old Altior can himself lay claim to being one of those. Unbeaten in every one of his 14 races since April 2015, he has a host of top-drawer victories to his name and this is the first target of the campaign for Nicky Henderson's superstar.

Another contest to look forward to is the Grade 1 Henry VIII Novices' Chase over the same trip as the Tingle Creek, won two years ago by Altior.

Elsewhere, There is also a popular meeting at Aintree at which the 5400m Randoxhealth.com Becher Chase is the highlight. Run over the Grand National fences, it has seen a couple of previous winners go on to future National glory – Amberleigh House and Silver Birch each winning both races (although not in the same season). Last year's winner Blaklion is set to bid for back-to-back victories. He was a leading fancy for last year's Grand National but got no further than the first fence, where he was brought down by a rival.

SUNDAY 9

Huntingdon stage their big day of the season with the Grade 2 Peterborough Chase, run over 4000m, the feature event. There is Grade 1 action at Punchestown with the John Durkan Memorial Punchestown Chase the highlight. Among those pencilled in for the race are the Willie Mullins-trained Bellshill and the remarkable Gordon Elliott-trained mare Shattered Love, who can be hard to catch when getting into a rhythm with her jumping.

FRIDAY 14 - SATURDAY 15

It's back to Cheltenham for the two-day International meeting where highlights include the Unibet International Hurdle, the Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle and the JCB Triumph Hurdle Trial. The International, a Grade 2 event over 3400m, was first established in 1963, and often brings together a high-class field of potential Champion Hurdle candidates. The last horse to win both the International Hurdle and the Champion Hurdle in the same season was Rooster Booster in 2002-03, but it would be no surprise to see last year's winner My Tent Or Yours in action for Nicky Henderson. Evan Williams is also looking at the race for the progressive Silver Streak.

WEDNESDAY 26 - THURSDAY 27

The two-day 32 Red Winter Festival at Kempton is the highlight of the festive period for British racegoers with the King George VI Chase the showpiece. A race steeped in racing folklore, due in no small part to multiple winners Desert Orchid and Kauto Star, several stars have been born in the 4800m contest. The leading contenders for this year's race include 2017 hero Might Bite, 2016 winner Thistlecrack, reigning Gold Cup winner Native River, and the horse who beat them all in Haydock's Betfair Chase, the Nigel Twiston-Davies-trained Bristol de Mai.

Paul Nicholls is looking at stepping his exciting grey Politologue (pictured below) up in trip after a tidy victory at Ascot in Grade 2 company. The trainer said: "You have got to stay round Kempton, but he stayed at Ascot over the two-miles-five. He has never run over three, but he has won over two-five now, and I've got no reason to see why he won't stay."

**WEDNESDAY 26 - SATURDAY 29**

Four days of top-notch action to look forward to at the Leopardstown Christmas Festival with a host of Grade One races for novices, hurdlers and chasers alike. The Savills Chase and the Ryanair Hurdle are the headline attractions.

Gordon Elliott has vowed to take his stars to the meeting which boasts a major increase in prize-money for its big races, including all seven Grade 1s.

Faugheen would be an interesting contender in the Ryanair Hurdle, having completely failed to fire at long odds-on in the same race 12 months ago and again disappointed on his seasonal reappearance. Can Willie Mullins get the brilliant 2015 Champion Hurdle winner firing again?

THURSDAY 27

It's Coral Welsh Grand National day at Chepstow and the valuable marathon event (5900m) is always a well-contested affair. Frequently run in very demanding conditions, it features some very classy winners on its roll of honour.

WATCH ALL OF THE ACTION LIVE ON GBI RACING IN DECEMBER!