

JCB Triumph Hurdle

In-Running Guide

1.30pm, Friday 19th March

Finding the winner?

The Stats

(last 10 renewals with most recent results on right and in bold)

Winners Age	4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4
Winners SP	14/1, 11/4f, 7/1f, 16/1, 20/1, 20/1, 9/1, 7/2f, 5/1, 11/2
Fate of Favourite	4 th , 1 st , 1 st , 1 st , PU, 3 rd , 10 th , 3 rd , 1 st , 2 nd , 2nd
Winning Distance	1 1/4, 8, 2, 11, hd, 2, hd, 5, 2 1/4, 3/4
Previous run	1 st , 1 st , 1 st , 2 nd , 1 st , 1 st , 1 st , 1 st , 2 nd , 1st

Previous Winners

<i>Year</i>	<i>Winner</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Trainer</i>	<i>Odds</i>
2009	Zaynar	4	N J Henderson	11/2
2008	Celestial Halo	4	P F Nicholls	5/1
2007	Katchit	4	A King	11/2
2006	Detroit City	4	P J Hobbs	7/2F
2005	Penzance	4	A King	9/1
2004	Made In Japan	4	P J Hobbs	20/1
2003	Spectroscope	4	Jonjo O'Neill	20/1
2002	Scolardy	4	W Mullins	16/1
2000	Snow Drop	4	F Doumen	7/1
1999	Katarino	4	N J Henderson	11/4

The Trends

- **11 of the last 16 winners started in the top four in the betting.**

(Alaivan, Carlito Brigante, Secant Star and Soldatino are likely to be the leading players this year).

- **The Irish have only won one of the last 11 renewals.**

(They have a strong hand this year, but this is a worrying stat for supporters of Alaivan, Carlito Brigante and Secant Star).

- **Only one northern trained winner since 1976.**

- **13 of the last 15 winners won their prep race.**

- 15 out of the last 16 winner's have won at least twice.

- If the ground description is 'good' then concentrate on the speedier Flat Bred types but if it is 'good to soft' or worse, then be with the National Hunt and better staying types as the races are usually run at a decent clip therefore stamina comes into play.

- Alan King is the trainer to follow in this event. He has sent out 2 winners and 3 placed horses in the last 5 renewals which, considering it is such a highly competitive affair, is a stat that you cannot ignore.

In-Running Trading Advice

It's important to side with a decent recruit from the flat or a French bred as they are far more battle hardened than their more traditionally bred counterparts. Interestingly, the last five winners of this contest have been ridden aggressively up with the pace. In fact, all of them (Penzance, Detroit City, Katchit, Celestial Halo and Zaynar) led over the last. Inevitably, one or two horses will arrive there between the last two flights running away – one such example was Starluck last year – but you need to stay every yard to win at Cheltenham, and he was even run out of it for second place by Walkon. Detroit City was a Cesarewitch winner on the Flat and

Celestial Halo a middle-distance Group horse, so stamina is everything, and this is not a race for the faint-hearted.

Here's a look at some of the leading contenders and some trading advice if you are looking to get involved in-running....

Alaivan

Potential – Lay in-running

He is definitely the classiest of the flat recruits and absolutely demolished his opposition at Fairyhouse last time. There are a couple of worries though; one that all his best form is on heavy ground, while he has also been beaten the only two times he has gone left-handed. Cheltenham is a completely different environment for any of these juveniles and if he can handle the pressure he will have a big chance. However, although it's likely that he will travel strongly for the majority of this race, he folded fairly cheaply when Carlito Brigante took him on at Leopardstown so it may pay to lay him at the top of the hill when he will surely still be travelling well.

Carlito Brigante

Potential - Back to Lay

Gordon Elliott is a trainer on the up and it's only a matter of time before he saddles his first Cheltenham Festival winner. Carlito Brigante has done nothing wrong in his last three outings, beating Alaivan easily before another impressive victory against Brian Ellison's decent Ultimate. In a weak year, he definitely has a decent chance and the fact that he's not trained by one of the big guns means that there is a chance he will be underestimated by the in-running players. The Irish don't have a great record in this race and although I think he will travel well, I'll be locking in a profit before he meets the rising ground.

Secant Star

Potential – Lay in-running

Another promising Irish runner who won his last start comfortably. However, Willie Mullins did say that he wanted to get another run into him before this race, which he hasn't managed, and that he is a chaser in the maker. There haven't been many future chasers win this race in the past decade and there has to be a doubt that he will have the tactical speed at the business end. A bigger worry may be that he tends to take a few liberties with the obstacles, which resulted in him tipping up at the last on his debut over hurdles. He should travel fairly well throughout, but it doesn't generally pay to back horses who don't jump well in this race and he looks a decent in-running lay.

Advisor

Potential - Back in-running

He wasn't the strongest of these on the flat, but seems to have been transformed since his move to Ditcheat. Both wins have been very impressive, although they have been with plenty of cut in the ground and it remains to be seen how well he will cope with quicker conditions. He

wouldn't be as fast as some of his rivals, so there's every chance he may get tapped for toe as the pace quickens down the hill. That would be the time to step in, as stamina is probably his forte and he should battle strongly up the run-in.

Soldatino

Potential - Back to Lay

Nicky Henderson won this race last year with the excellent Zaynar and looks to have unearthed another potential superstar from France in Soldatino. It's true that it was a weak Adonis Hurdle that he won at Kempton, but he couldn't have won it any more impressively, especially as he was giving all of his rivals weight. He travelled like a decent horse, although there must be a concern that his two career wins have come on soft ground. That is the same for most juveniles, though, thanks to the terrible winter. As is always the case in a race like the Triumph, there is no guarantee that he will come up the hill, but he should be travelling well two out, so you should look to lock in a profit.