



Betfair Media Release

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Cyrname headlines entries for Betfair Ascot Chase

Defending champion **Cyrname** headlines nine excellent entries for the £150,000 G1 Betfair Ascot Chase, staged over two miles and five furlongs at Ascot on Saturday, February 15, details of which are revealed today. The Betfair Ascot Chase is the most valuable chase staged at Ascot.

Cyrname, the 4/6 with Betfair, is one of two entries along with Frodon for 11-times champion Jump trainer Paul Nicholls. The Ditcheat handler is the joint winning-most trainer in the race's history with four successes - Rockforce (2000), Kauto Star (2008), Silviniaco Conti (2016) and Cyrname (2019).

Cyrname was a devastating 17-length winner of last year's Betfair Ascot Chase, defeating 2018 winner Waiting Patiently. He returned to action this season with a defeat of Altior in the G2 Christy 1965 Chase at Ascot, his third straight success at the track, on November 23.

The eight-year-old son of Nickname subsequently finished second to stable companion Clan Des Obeaux in the G1 King George VI Chase at Kempton Park on Boxing Day on his first attempt at three miles. Cyrname is looking to become the first horse since Riverside Theatre (2011 & 2012) to win successive runnings of the Betfair Ascot Chase and the fifth dual winner in the contest's history.

With an official BHA rating of 177, Cyrname is the highest-rated Jump horse in training, 2lb clear of Altior.

Nicholls' other representative, the ultra-consistent **Frodon**, returned to the winners' enclosure in the G2 Silviniaco Conti Chase at Kempton earlier this

month. The eight-year-old enjoyed a tremendous time of things last season, winning four of his five starts, which culminated with a fine success in the G1 Ryanair Chase at the Cheltenham Festival. Frodon, who has struck up an excellent rapport with jockey Bryony Frost, is an 8/1 chance with Betfair.

Gloucestershire trainer Nigel Twiston-Davies has yet to win the Betfair Ascot Chase but has a live contender in the shape of **Riders Onthe Storm** (3/1). Formerly trained in Ireland by Tom Taaffe, the son of Scorpion was purchased for £50,000 in May and is unbeaten in two starts for his new connections. The seven-year-old backed up an impressive British debut at Aintree in November with a convincing seven-length success in the Betfair Exchange Graduation Chase over the course and distance at Ascot on December 21.

Naunton-based Twiston-Davies said today: "Riders Onthe Storm is on target to run in the Betfair Ascot Chase on February 15. He has come out of Ascot very well and was impressive there last time.

"He likes the track and the Ryanair Chase at the Cheltenham Festival is the long-term aim."

Riders On the Storm's part-owner Carl Hinchy, commented: "Riders Onthe Storm is in good form and the plan is for him to run in the Betfair Ascot Chase.

"This race has been the target since his win at Ascot last time out and it fits in nicely in terms of the Ryanair Chase at the Cheltenham Festival, which is where he will go next after this.

"Nigel is happy with him and he's in great nick so hopefully he can run well."

Five-time champion jump trainer Nicky Henderson has enjoyed three successes in the Betfair Ascot Chase courtesy of Riverside Theatre in 2011 and 2012 along with Tiutchev in 2001.

The Seven Barrows maestro has two entries in 2020 - three-time Ascot winner and this season's G2 Peterborough Chase scorer **Top Notch** (7/1) plus G2 Haldon Gold Cup victor **Janika** (7/1), both of whom are owned by Simon Munir and Isaac Souede.

The sole Irish-trained entry is 2017 G1 Cheltenham Gold Cup winner **Sizing John** (12/1) for Jessica Harrington. The 10-year-old has amassed over £776,000 in prize during his career and backed up success in jump racing's Blue Riband event with victories in the G1 Punchestown Gold Cup and G1 John Durkan Memorial Chase at Punchestown.

Off the track for over two years, Sizing John made his reappearance over hurdles at Punchestown on December 31 and was travelling strongly before falling at the third flight from home.

One Irish-trained horse has landed the Betfair Ascot Chase, with Sound Man taking the spoils for Edward O'Grady back in 1996.

Other notable entries include **Saint Calvados** (Harry Whittington, 8/1), a game winner of a handicap chase at Cheltenham in October and who contested the 2019 G1 Queen Mother Champion Chase at the Cheltenham Festival, along with the Gary Moore-trained **Traffic Fluide** (50/1) who finished fifth behind Waiting Patiently in the 2018 running of the Betfair Ascot Chase. The 10-year-old has been off the track through injury since landing the G3 Sodexo Gold Cup at Ascot in November, 2018 and has the Randox Health Grand National as an aim this season.

The nine entries are completed by 13-year-old veteran **Valdez** (100/1), a G2 winner in his prime, for Barbury Castle trainer Alan King.

Betfair spokesman Barry Orr commented today: "No surprise, Cyrname heads the betting at 4/6 with the big improver, Riders On the Storm, second in at 3/1.

"Frodon is an interesting entry and he is available at 8/1."

Betfair Ascot Chase, Betfair odds: 4/6 Cyrname; 3/1 Riders On the Storm; 7/1 Janika, Top Notch; 8/1 Frodon, Saint Calvados; 12/1 Sizing John; 50/1 Traffic Fluide; 100/1 Valdez

The Betfair Ascot Chase

G1, £150,000 total prize fund. Ascot, Saturday, February 15, 2020, 2m 5f 8y. For five-year-olds and upwards, who are allotted a rating of 130 or more by the BHA Head of Handicapping following a review of the horses entered and after taking account of races run up to and including the day prior to confirmation. Horses which are not qualified for a rating in Great Britain, Ireland or France may also be entered. Such horses may be eligible providing the Handicapper is satisfied that the horse's racecourse performances up to and including the day prior to confirmation would merit a minimum rating of 130. The decision of the BHA Handicapper shall be final. Weights: 5yo 11st 5lb, 6yo and upwards 11st 7lb, mares allowed 7lb. Entries closed January 28 (**9 entries**), five-day & £7,500 supplementary stage February 10, final declarations 10am February 13.

Horse	Age	Owner	Trainer
Cyrname (FR)	8	Mrs Johnny de la Hey	Paul Nicholls
Frodon (FR)	8	P J Vogt	Paul Nicholls

Janika (FR)	7	Simon Munir & Isaac Souede	Nicky Henderson
Riders Onthe Storm (IRE)	7	Carl Hinchy and Mark Scott	Nigel Twiston-Davies
Saint Calvados (FR)	7	Kate & Andrew Brooks	Harry Whittington
Sizing John	10	Ann & Alan Potts Limited	Jessica Harrington IRE
Top Notch (FR)	9	Simon Munir & Isaac Souede	Nicky Henderson
Traffic Fluide (FR)	10	Galloping On The South Downs Partnership	Gary Moore
Valdez	13	Riverdee Stable	Alan King

9 entries

1 Irish-trained

About Betfair

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