



for immediate release, Thursday, February 13, 2020

Britain's top-rated chaser Cyrname heads quartet for Saturday's Betfair Ascot Chase

Cyrname (Paul Nicholls/Harry Cobden) heads the field for the £150,000 Betfair Ascot Chase (3.35pm), staged over two miles and five furlongs on Saturday, February 15.

The Sam de la Hey-owned eight-year-old was imperious when taking the Betfair Ascot Chase by 17 lengths in 2019 and confirmed his liking for Ascot when defeating the mighty Altior by two and a quarter lengths in the G2 Christy 1965 Chase, run over Saturday's distance, in November. Cyrname will be stepping back in trip, having finished runner-up to stable companion Clan Des Obeaux on his first attempt at three miles at Kempton Park on Boxing Day.

Cyrname has an BHA rating of 177, making him the highest-rated chaser in training in Britain, 2lb clear of Altior. He is the 2/5 favourite with Betfair.

There have been four dual winners of the Betfair Ascot Chase but only one has achieved two victories in successive years - Riverside Theatre (2011 & 2012).

The closest rival to Cyrname in the market is **Riders Onthe Storm** (Nigel Twiston-Davies/Sam Twiston-Davies), Betfair's 3/1 second favourite. The seven-year-old has been a revelation since joining Twiston-Davies this season, landing a valuable handicap chase at Aintree in November and following up with an impressive seven-length victory in the Betfair Exchange Graduation Chase, staged over Saturday's course and distance, on December 21.

Trainer Nigel Twiston-Davies said: "Riders Onthe Storm is on course for the Betfair Ascot Chase and we are looking forward to running him.

"This race has been the plan since his last win at Ascot and he is in good form.

"It is obviously going to be tough to get the better of Cyname, but we are going to have a go and are looking forward to the challenge.

"Riders Onthe Storm has been brilliant for us since arriving from Ireland and hopefully there is more improvement to come.

"If Saturday goes OK, then he'll head to the Ryanair at the Cheltenham Festival."

Completing Saturday's line-up are G2 Haldon Gold Cup scorer **Janika** (Nicky Henderson/Daryl Jacob, 8/1) and **Traffic Fluide** (Gary Moore/Joshua Moore, 66/1), a G3 winner over three miles at Ascot who will be making his seasonal debut and holds a Randox Health Grand National entry.

Betfair spokesman, Barry Orr, commented today: "Cyname looks an absolute monster around Ascot and it's very much a home game for him but, Riders Onthe Storm, is one of the most improved chasers in training and, while he still has a lot to find on official ratings, he is improving and punters haven't underestimated his chances."

The Betfair Ascot Chase - Betfair odds: 2/5 Cyname, 3/1 Riders Onthe Storm, 8/1 Janika, 66/1 Traffic Fluide

The going at Ascot is currently Soft, Good to Soft in places. Saturday's seven-race programme runs from 1.15pm to 4.45pm. Declared runners for the other six races will be known shortly after 10.00am tomorrow.

Betfair Ascot Chase - Facts & Figures

The Betfair Ascot Chase was first run in 1995. It was initially staged on Wednesday, before moving to its current Saturday slot in 1999. The 2005 & 2006 runnings took place at Lingfield Park, while Ascot was undergoing redevelopment.

There have been four dual winners - Tiutchev (2001, 2003), Monet's Garden (2007, 2010), Riverside Theatre (2011, 2012) & Cue Card (2013, 2017).

Martin Pipe and Paul Nicholls are the most successful trainers with four successes each. Pipe triumphed with Tresor de Mai (2002), Tiutchev (2003),

It Takes Time (2005) & Our Vic (2006), while Nicholls scored with Rockforce (2000), Kauto Star (2008), Silviniaco Conti (2016) and Cyrname (2019).

Barry Geraghty is the most successful jockey, with three victories - Monet's Garden (2010) and Riverside Theatre (2011, 2012).

It is a good race for favourites, with 16 of the 25 market leaders (64 per cent) having been successful.

The biggest shock was provided by 14/1 shot It Takes Time (2005).

Eight-year-olds are the most successful age group, accounting for 10 winners. The youngest winner was six-year-old Strong Promise in 1998, while the oldest was Monet's Garden, who was a 12-year-old for his second success in 2010.

There has been one Irish-trained winner - Sound Man (1996).

About Betfair

Betfair operates globally, online-only, and gives online sports betting customers an unparalleled offer with its market-leading Exchange and Sportsbook providing consistent value, choice and innovation. Betfair is well known for its partnerships within Sport, both in the UK and Europe, and offer customers leading insight through our wide range of ambassadors.

For further information please contact

Barry Orr, Head of Media Relations at Betfair on +353 (0) 86 0246086 or email: barry.orr@betfair.com