

ARKLE TROPHY

The statistics as presented below are thoroughly researched and valid. They are, however, presented to augment and complement the analysis given in the other parts of the guide and we would hope they would be used in that way.

IRISH INDEPENDENT ARKLE CHALLENGE TROPHY CHASE

10 Year Trends 1999-2009 (2001 abandoned)

The figures for all the various statistics are in date order, earliest first from left to right.

Contents

Chase debut record

Last time out record

Total career starts prior to chase debut

Total career starts over fences (prior)

Strike rate over fences (prior)

Class statistics

Age statistics

Days since ran record

Irish race record

Fate of the favourite

SP of favourite

Betting position of the winner

SP of the winner

BHB rating (Where provided)

Profile analysis

ARKLE TROPHY

Chase debut record reads:

1 1 F 1 1 2 1 1 1 1

80% of all winners in the first two on chase debut.

Last time out record reads:

1 1 F 1 1 3 1 1 2 2

80% of all winners in the first two last time out

Total career starts prior to chase debut reads (FLAT/NHF/HURDLES):

8 18 16 10 10 21 10 14 8 5

100% of winners ran within twenty one races prior to chase debut.

Total career starts over fences reads (correlates in line to the above):

4 2 5 3 1 4 4 4 4 4

100% of winners ran no more then five times over fences.

Strike rate over fences reads (correlates in line to the above):

75% 100% 60% 100% 100% 25% 100% 75% 75% 25%

Rounded up to the nearest percent.

Average % = 73.5%

Grade 1 wins prior to Arkle Chase:

0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Age

5 7 8 6 5 7 5 7 7 7

90% of winners aged between five and seven.

Days since ran record reads:

24 37 44 24 41 52 22 52 37 23

info@patternsandprofiles.co.uk

ARKLE TROPHY

100% of winners ran within fifty two days.

Irish record reads:

5 4 1 6 2 4 4 4 10 4 1

Fate of the favourite reads:

5 3 2 1 F 7 7 2 3 F

SP of the favourite (Correlates in line to the above):

4-1 7-4 5-2 5-4 5-2 11-4 9-2 100-30 7-4 4-1

Betting position of the winner (asterisk denotes joint position in the market):

7 4 4 1 4 2 7 2 2 3*

80% of the winners were from the first four in the betting.

SP of the winner (correlates in line to the above):

11-1 8-1 11-2 5-4 9-1 7-1 15-2 7-2 6-1 8-1

BHB rating (where provided):

- - - - - 147 - - 154 152

Profile analysis:

Based on past statistics the following horses best fit the profile.

Sizing Europe

Riverside Theatre

ARKLE TROPHY



POSTFILES

INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

- 15th NOV 2009

Although this was not the most competitive of chases, the winner **Tataniano**, though pulling hard in front over the first few, could do no more than lead all the way, jump well and win with something to spare. **Fosters Cross** was travelling just as well as the winner when unseating his rider at the third last fence at which point **Pigeon Island** was asked to close on the clear leader and, although he made some headway under pressure the winner was always travelling well within himself and won without being asked a question. None of the vanquished have franked the form so far and although **Tataniano** may well turn out to be a lot better than he was able to prove today, the fact that he is so short in the market for the Arkle is more to do with the name of his jockey and trainer rather than any substance to his form thus far.

HENRY V111

- 5th DEC 2009

This was a very disappointing turn out for such a prestigious race even though it still offered an interesting contest between two of the most written about novice chasers of this season in **Crack Away Jack** and **Sommersby** as well as the Paul Nicholls challenger **Tchico Polos**. The Nicholls horse tried to make all and at one point was several lengths clear of his three rivals led by **Sommersby**, who narrowed the deficit at the railway fences before joining his rival on the run to the second last flight, at which point the Henrietta Knight horse made his first real mistake of the contest; consequently, the two leaders were joined by **Crack Away Jack** at the last with a ding dong battle to the line looking very likely. Sadly it was not to be as McCoy roused his mount for extra effort and the talented and willing **Sommersby** duly obliged quickly putting distance between himself and the odds on favourite at the line and leaving the impression that if McCoy had chosen to kick on earlier he may well have run out an even more convincing winner. This was an excellent performance by the winner, though how much relevance the challenge offered by this four runner race on testing ground at **Sandown** has to that of a big field, fast run chase at **Cheltenham** in March remains open to debate.

BORD NA MONA

- 26th DEC 2009

This looked to be the most intriguing Arkle trial of the season thus far and with **Captain Cee Bee** falling at the last when challenging the eventual winner **Sizing Europe** the **Leopardstown** crowd were certainly witness to a dramatic finale to a fascinating contest. **Osana** set out to make all until being easily brushed aside by the two principles on the run to the last fence; on this evidence the ex David Pipe hurdler appears to be a little below the best in the two mile novice chase division whilst **Fosters Cross** was travelling well enough in fourth place when, not for the first time he blundered away his chances at the fifth last fence. If his trainer Thomas Mullins can improve his jumping **Fosters Cross** might turn out to be a fair bit better than his current form figures suggest.

What was particularly impressive about the performance of **Captain Cee Bee** was the effortless way he closed up the six length gap on the two leaders from the turn for home. The warning signs start flashing when a young horse has to take a year out through injury so it is especially pleasing to see Edward Harty's horse run in a way that suggests he has retained most, if not all of his ability. **Sizing Europe** looked second best as the two leaders jumped the last fence and **Captain Cee Bee** will probably go down in most people's eyes as a slightly

info@patternsandprofiles.co.uk

ARKLE TROPHY

unfortunate loser. The trainer of the winner felt that his horse had not run to the level of his previous form; however, though it is more than possible that future events may prove him right, we will do much better at this game if we focus on what we see rather than what we hear. At this moment in time, therefore, **Captain Cee Bee** appears to hold a more obvious chance of winning the Arkle Chase in March in comparison to **Sizing Europe**, especially when one considers the very different experiences these two rivals had the last time they made it to the **Cheltenham** Festival in 2008.

WAYWARD LAD

- 27th DEC 2009

Riverside Theatre underlined the incredible strength in depth of Nicky Henderson trained novice chasers this season by running out an extremely impressive winner of this Grade Two event. The runner up **El Dancer** was beaten by 12 lengths and offers some substance to the form as he had previously finished a close second in a hot novice chase at **Plumpton**.

This was another small field trial with little strength in depth; nonetheless, **Riverside Theatre** now boasts two wide margin successes to his name over fences at Grade One tracks and at this stage appears to hold as strong a chance as any of the English contingent for the two mile novice crown in March. He is a good jumper, has winning form on ground ranging from soft to good and as a fairly inexperienced six year old may be open to more improvement than most. His double figure price for the Arkle Chase is probably as much to do with his trainer enjoying the luxury of holding multiple high class entries for the race.

OPERA HAT

- 7th FEB 2010

Captain Cee Bee justified his starting odds of 4/11 with an effortless victory over **Fosters Cross** in the Opera Hat Novices Chase at **Naas**. The runner up had previously been travelling extremely well and looking very dangerous just behind **Tataniano** when coming down at the third last fence at **Cheltenham** in November, yet was brushed aside with consummate ease as **Captain Cee Bee** went from two lengths down to three lengths up off the home bend. The fact that he again got in close to the last fence is of concern for his chances at **Cheltenham**; however, he recovered quickly and surged thirteen lengths clear on the run in without being asked the full question. Both of the first two home should be better still when they are able to race on a faster surface and **Fosters Cross** is probably capable of finishing in the first few in the Arkle if his jumping stands up to the faster pace; nevertheless, this was a very good jumping display from a horse that has had plenty of problems in that area recently. **Captain Cee Bee** now heads for **Cheltenham** in the best of form with a relatively small question mark next to him in the jumping department.

ARKLE TROPHY

THE GUIDE

CAPTAIN CEE BEE

Captain Cee Bee has the profile of a champion having won all five of his completed starts over obstacles; he would probably have made it six from six if he had not fallen at the last fence at **Leopardstown** when having the Grade One Bord Na Mona Chase and **Sizing Europe** at his mercy. He is already a Grade One winner, however, having won the 2008 Supreme Novices Hurdle in convincing style from **Binocular** and the combination of these two Grade One performances is probably the strongest form on offer for the Arkle Chase. He beat **Fosters Cross** very easily at **Naas** in his final run before the festival, though the fact that he again got in too close to the final fence remains some cause for concern. Nonetheless, if he does put in a clear round of jumping in the Arkle Chase he will be the one they all have to beat and his price of **4/1** appears quite generous in comparison to one or two other festival favourites.

SOMERSBY

Having won two from two over fences **Somersby** is now the shortest priced British runner in the race. He can boast solid previous form at the festival having plugged on for third spot behind **Go Native** and **Medermid** in last year's Supreme Novices Hurdle; both horses are now fancied for this season's Champion Hurdle. The novice that he beat on his chasing debut at Warwick, the Charlie Mann trained **Kanad**, has been beaten twice since and is currently rated 122 over fences. In his second outing over fences he was upped in class to contest a Grade Two event at Sandown run on soft ground. He proved well up to the task as he forged ahead on the run in to win this four runner affair with something to spare from the highly touted **Crack Away Jack** and the Paul Nicholls front runner **Tchico Polo**. As impressive as this performance appeared to be, it is important to note that none of the horses finishing behind him in either of his races have franked the form since. **Somersby** may well turn out to be a lot better than he has had the opportunity to show on the racecourse thus far, but the fact remains that he has only beaten six other horse over fences and his price of about **7/1** is as much to do with reputation and potential as it is to do with what he has actually achieved; as such there are at least one or two candidates with more proven credentials.

SIZING EUROPE

After winning three relatively weakly contested novice chases at **Punchestown**, **Sizing Europe** stepped up in class to maintain his 100% record over fences with a hard fought success over **Osana** in the Grade One Bord Na Mona Novice Chase at **Leopardstown** in December. This was the first time **Sizing Europe** had run in a high class competitive chase and he was constantly outjumped by the front running **Osana** before being chased up to join that leader at the second last flight; he was then hard ridden to take the lead off the home turn but was easily closed down and joined by **Captain Cee Bee** who was certainly going the better of the two when he came down at the last fence. **Sizing Europe** stayed on well enough to run out a five and a half length winner from **Osana** in what could easily be as good a two mile novice chase as we have seen all season. Although it would be no surprise to see **Sizing Europe** finish thereabouts in the Arkle, it is also difficult to forget his weak finish up the **Cheltenham** hill behind **Katchit** in the 2008 Champion Hurdle. The winner that day posted a time nearly two seconds slower than **Captain Cee Bee** had when winning the Supreme Novices Hurdle over the same course and distance earlier in the afternoon.

ARKLE TROPHY

RIVERSIDE THEATRE

Riverside Theatre is a 145 rated hurdler that has managed to transfer his ability to chasing having won both his starts over fences in very impressive fashion, particularly in his latest outing when he handed out a convincing beating to the Lucy Wadham trained **El Dancer** at **Kempton** in December. He was found wanting in both of the better class races he contested over hurdles and is yet to be tested by a top class opponent over fences; the Grade Two event he won last time out was a relatively uncompetitive affair. The runner up **El Dancer** was well held when falling in his next start at **Doncaster** and the third horse, **Rory Boy** was well beaten at **Cheltenham** off a mark of 135 in January. Nonetheless, **Riverside Theatre** hails from a top class yard with an abundance of good class novice chasers to choose from; furthermore, he has jumped well enough and won with plenty in hand in both of his chases and remains an interesting outsider at a double figure price.

TATANIANO

Tataniano lost his unbeaten record over fences with a disappointing defeat at the hands of the 118 rated **Suntini** on soft ground over a trip just beyond two miles and two furlongs at **Newbury**. The handicapper reacted by putting **Suntini** up to a mark of 134, which appears more than a little harsh, as it seems just as likely that **Tataniano** is not quite as good as he was previously rated, as it does that **Suntini** has improved by 16 pounds to win. Even if the handicapper is correct this still leaves the Paul Nicholls horse on a mark considerably below 140 and therefore, a minimum of ten pounds below the standard required to get competitive in an average Arkle Chase. His price for the Arkle before this race was hovering around **8/1**, which was probably as much a reflection on the name of his trainer and jockey as it was on the substance of the form of his first two successes. He is now trading at a more realistic **14/1** which, particularly given this latest performance, is probably much nearer the mark. Better ground may well show him in a different light, but for now his chances appear to be a little below those of at least two or three of his rivals.

SPORTS LINE

Sports Line acquitted himself well in the Grade One Arkle Novice Chase at **Leopardstown** in January on what was only his second ever race over fences. He has now won four times and finished runner up on the other three occasions in seven career starts. He has raced on heavy ground in both his chases to date and is yet to race on any ground with the word good in the title. He was outstayed on the run in by the Henry De Bromhead trained **An Cathaoir Mor** at **Leopardstown** which may well have been a consequence of him following a very fast pace, as the two front runners stopped to nothing on the run in. The winner was previously beaten by **Captain Cee Bee** and probably rates some way behind the stable's number one contender for the Arkle in **Sizing Europe**. All things considered it is fairly difficult to quantify the level of **Sports Line's** form on such relatively little evidence; nevertheless, his chances will be more obvious if the ground is testing and although, on the balance of probability, he may have something to find with the two Irish favourites, he still has an excellent chance of finishing in the money and a perfectly plausible prospect of being placed.

ARKLE TROPHY

Please bear in mind that many of the horse profiles were prepared well in advance of the conclusions. I decided not to edit them as they represent my thinking at the time of writing.

CONCLUSIONS

In a race where there are four or five legitimate contenders, **Captain Cee Bee** is the first choice; however, his odds of about **3/1** look a bit skinny in such an open race. **Riverside Theatre** has solid claims but his double figure price has long since disappeared and current odds of between **7/1** and **9/1** appear to be a realistic representation of his chances, particularly as he has only won when racing on flat tracks. Apparently, **Long Run** will only take part in the Arkle in the event of it being run on testing ground; this being the case, his current odds of **7/1** with Bet 365 (Non Runner No Bet) are worth taking, as we will have our stake returned if he does not run and he could easily trade at half his current price if he takes part, therefore giving us the option of laying off and taking the free bet.

