

## **RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL CLASSIC@2024.12.24**

### **Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 1, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R105.000, 12:15GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** PARABELLUM acquitted himself well in 2 introductory sprints and, on pedigree, this extended trip should be more to his liking. He could unlock sufficient improvement over this distance to open his account. CHABAL and FIZZLY BUBBLY fit a similar profile and will be competitive if improving for this step up in trip. GIFT OF ROYAL finished a career-best 3rd over 1500m last month and need only repeat that performance to make his presence felt.

#### **Selections:**

#9 Parabellum, #4 Chabal, #7 Fizzly Bubbly, #5 Gift Of Royal

### **Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 2, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R120.000, 12:50GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** CITY LIGHTS is overdue a maiden win. She wouldn't be winning out of turn but has proven costly to follow and is vulnerable to less-exposed younger rivals. INSTANT ATTRACTION is closely matched on the form of a recent 2000m meeting and is worse off at the weights. However, she has more scope for improvement so may have the measure of her familiar foe, even over this shorter trip. GREAT NOTION is progressing with each start and she needn't improve much on her recent course-and-distance 2nd to go one better. TODOQUE appeals most of the remainder.

#### **Selections:**

#5 Great Notion, #6 Instant Attraction, #1 City Lights, #4 Todoque

### **Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 3, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R100.000, 13:25GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** STREWN SKY and KUDZU are lightly raced 4yo geldings with the form and experience to play leading roles. Preference is for the top-weighted former who is ideally stationed in gate No 1 with the blinkers retained, while his stable companion jumps from the widest gate. GREENHOUSE is one of 3 fillies in the lineup and has the most scope for improvement, especially over this extended distance she is bred to enjoy. SALUTE THE FLAG bounced back to form with a good 2nd at a higher level last time and his rider's 1.5kg allowance negates the resultant 2-point penalty. MUTARAZI has claims too.

#### **Selections:**

#1 Strewn Sky, #7 Greenhouse, #2 Kudzu, #3 Salute The Flag

### **Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 4, Gallops, 2400m, Turf, R100.000, 14:00GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** DAMOVA and IDEAL FUTURE are distance-suited hard-knockers with both the form and experience at this level to acquit themselves competitively. However, it may pay to follow the progress of maturing young stayer ANOTHER UNIVERSE who improved to win a 2000m maiden and could have more to give over this extended trip. ONLY A POET and JAPANESE MAPLE have already proven their effectiveness over this distance so shouldn't be taken lightly. NUCLEAR FORCE and ROMEO'S MAGIC aren't without a prayer either - they complete the shortlist.

#### **Selections:**

#6 Another Universe, #7 Damova, #1 Ideal Future, #4 Only A Poet

### **Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 5, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R100.000, 14:35GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** SAKHALA IS'CATHULO blew his chances at the start in KZN last month. He finished 2nd in a stronger race at this venue in his previous outing, albeit off a 2-point lower mark, and will be competitive with a repeat of that performance. THUNDERBIRD made no impression at a higher level last time but should fare better in this grade over 1000m. COMMANDER OF ALL, BREGARDT and PACIFIC have the means to get involved but must bounce back from disappointing recent efforts. Veteran mares

IN THE ETHER and SAMOA continue to acquit themselves well and the 10yo latter may well be rewarded for her consistency.

**Selections:**

#5 Samoa, #1 Sakhala Is'Cathulo, #4 In The Ether, #3 Commander Of All

**Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 6, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R105.000, 15:10GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** FAITHFUL NEO ran above market expectations when making a winning debut and she is open to any amount of improvement with that experience under her belt. MY ONE AND ONLY is another promising 3yo filly with scope for progress so is best kept safe. Consistent stablemate BEADED GOWN is in good form and should have a role to play say off her current mark. Last-start winners MICKE'S BOMB and WAITFORGREENLIGHT are experienced hard-knockers who remain competitive, despite resultant penalties. NEERAH, ROYAL HORIZON and class-dropper HEIRLOOM are attractive outsiders to consider.

**Selections:**

#1 Faithful Neo, #4 My One And Only, #5 Take Your Place, #11 Beaded Gown

**Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 7, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R135.000, 15:45GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** Sparingly raced FOREVERINMYDREAMS caught the eye when finishing 4th in a stronger race against male opposition. She would have tightened up with the benefit of that comeback run and remains open to improvement so could be worth siding with. JUST THE TWO OF US and LADY OF MEMPHIS are closely matched on the form of a similar 1000m event at this level but the former, who edged that meeting, is weighted to confirm her superiority on these terms. YOU BRING ME JOY and MIST IN SCOTLAND are out of sorts but have undeniable means. KIA KAHAA, NIGHT VIGIL and returning VIRGIN RIVER complete the shortlist.

**Selections:**

#3 Foreverinmydreams, #5 Just The Two Of Us, #6 Lady Of Memphis, #8 Virgin River

**Vaal Classic, 24.12.2024, Race 8, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R100.000, 16:20GMT+2**

**Race Summary:** RATTLE BAG has found a new lease on life. She is in good form and should remain competitive, even under joint top weight. Honest hard-knocker SUPER AWESOME has done all his winning on this course so he shouldn't be underestimated at this level off a career-low mark. ALONE TIME and returning THE CANE TRAIN are lightly raced sorts with scope for improvement over this distance, while consistent CALIDA is competitive off his current mark and should make his presence felt once more. However, preference is for lightly raced class-dropper NEW MEXICO who ought to take advantage of his reduced mark.

**Selections:**

#5 New Mexico, #1 Rattle Bag, #6 Calida, #2 Super Awesome

**Best Win:** #5 NEW MEXICO

**Best Value Bet:** #1 FAITHFUL NEO

**Best Longshot:** #1 FAITHFUL NEO