

RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL CLASSIC@2026.01.27

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 1, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R120.000, 12:10GMT+2

Race Summary: MASTER SPY improved with each start before a lengthy layoff. If anywhere near ready the Sean Tarry-trained gelding could open his account. But there are plenty with chances. EMERALD FORGE has run some decent races but has lacked resolve at the business end. A set of blinkers could do the trick for her. POMPEII SHIELD showed up well on his sprint debut and then ran a decent race over this distance last time. A wide draw is the only worry with him. UBERMENSCH, stablemate to MASTER SPY, has sprinted well but should prefer the distance. GUNBOAT is starting to improve.

Selections:

#3 Pompeii Shield, #4 Master Spy, #12 Emerald Forge, #1 Ubermensch

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 2, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R105.000, 12:45GMT+2

Race Summary: Act Of War filly MARIA LA GORDA had things go wrong in her last start. She is looking for the trip and can make good improvement. BABETTE'S FEAST keeps on running honest races. She wasn't far off Copper Cliff who has come out to win again and having drawn well she could also frank the form. Well-bred CHARIKLO is still learning what it is all about. She hasn't shown too much but has room for improvement and has a decent draw. BABY RED showed a lot more in her second outing but has drawn wide. She is carded to run earlier and that run must be taken into account.

Selections:

#5 Maria La Gorda, #3 Babette's Feast, #8 Chariklo, #10 Baby Red

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 3, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R105.000, 13:20GMT+2

Race Summary: HATS AND HEELS has been making steady improvement. She should be looking for the extra but she is carded to run on 22 January and that run must be taken into account. WAR TALK is knocking hard at the door. If able to overcome her wide gate, she could open her account after being beaten a neck in her last start. CHICKASAW finished behind WAR TALK previously. She is holding form and could show more over the longer distance. ASIAH'S TIARA has had many chances but continues to run decent races and could finally win. More can improve to win over the extra.

Selections:

#10 Hat And Heels, #5 War Talk, #6 Chickasaw, #2 Asiah's Tiara

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 4, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R160.000, 13:55GMT+2

Race Summary: Trainer Alec Laird holds a strong hand with three-year-olds ONE MORE STAR and TEXAS MISSILE. The former was beaten in a close finish after coming from way back last time. The race was run in record time and he looks a serious contender. TEXAS MISSILE has won two in a row over the distance. The lightly raced sort did what was required to win last time and while this is tougher, he has more to come. FLASHY APACHE has been beaten by both ONE MORE STAR and TEXAS MISSILE but should be right there at the revised weight terms. Specialist ROYAL EDITION must have a say.

Selections:

#8 One More Star, #6 Texas Missile, #7 Flashy Apache, #1 Royal Edition

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 5, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R135.000, 14:30GMT+2

Race Summary: BOSUM BUDDY loved racing fresh last time, winning in good style. She is at her best at this venue and must have a fair chance of following up. ROAMING SPIRIT doesn't know how to run a bad race. She must rate a big danger as she was only 1.40 lengths behind BOSUM BUDDY and is now 1.5kg better off. But the one to watch out for could be CAROLINE ISLAND who came back from almost a year's

rest to finish a decent fourth in what was a competitive affair. She should come on nicely with the run. Another talented sort, POBLANO, is long overdue to score.

Selections:

#6 Caroline Island, #4 Bosum Buddy, #3 Roaming Spirit, #2 Poblano

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 6, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R105.000, 15:05GMT+2

Race Summary: THERE SHE GOES came from the clouds to win as she liked under Andrew Fortune. She is on a roll and bidding to make it three wins on the bounce for her in-form yard. PLUMBAGO PARK is another in with a big chance. She was beaten 0.50 lengths by DEAL MAKER in her last start and should be able to turn the form around with a now 4.5kg better off. TEMPRANILLO was beaten as favourite in that race but looks a lot better than that and must be given another chance. DEAL MAKER is better than her last run and has the leading rider up. More can earn.

Selections:

#3 There She Goes, #6 Plumbago Park, #7 Tempranillo, #1 Deal Maker

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 7, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R90.000, 15:40GMT+2

Race Summary: Probably the toughest race on the card and it may pay to go wide in exotic bets. BLINDFIRE is better than his last run and back at the track where he has produced his best form should give a good account of himself. TIME FOR CHARITY also has good form at this venue. She was beaten 0.80 lengths over 1200m last time and back over her best distance should have every chance. ORIENTAL BOUQUET's last run in yielding going is best ignored. She ran some fair races prior and must be taken seriously. JET CAT and NKANDLA GOLD are both capable of upsetting the principals.

Selections:

#2 Blindfire, #6 Time For Charity, #9 Oriental Bouquet, #7 Jet Cat

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 8, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R90.000, 16:15GMT+2

Race Summary: DONDOYAKI followed up her maiden win with a solid second place finish against much stronger. She is dropping in class and has a 4kg apprentice claim to boost her chances of seeing out the extra. FALCONFLY weaved her way to win with something in hand after a rest. It was the five-year-old mare's fifth start and she could be up to the task in this lower division handicap. SHEETS AND GOGGLES has won twice over the distance so has no stamina doubts. She looks capable of better than what she showed recently. Last start winner GIFT OF ROYAL and COMMANDER OF ALL have claims too.

Selections:

#1 Dondoyaki, #2 Falconfly, #3 Sheets And Goggles, #5 Gift Of Royal

Vaal Classic, 27.01.2026, Race 9, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R125.000, 16:50GMT+2

Race Summary: Querari colt QUICKFREEZE ran out a comfortable winner of his second start. He is bred for the extra and should have every chance of following up with the leading rider from gate No 1. FATHER CHRISTMAS also has one of the best jockeys up. He won his last start with something in hand and could take it to the wire. LAUGHING WILLIAM ran a fair race after rest and rates a serious threat from a plum stall. Rested REDLIGHTGREENLIGHT, FOSTINOVO (wide draw) and easy last start winner CONTINENTAL KING need to be respected.

Selections:

#10 Quickfreeze, #2 Father Christmas, #7 Laughing William, #4 Redlightgreenlight

Best Win: #6 CAROLINE ISLAND

Best Value Bet: #5 MARIA LA GORDA
Best Longshot: #5 MARIA LA GORDA