Sha Tin Selections
(Sunday, January 12, 2025)

Race 1: #5 Flying Dragon, #6 Fung, #2 Smart Leader, #11 Patch Of Watch

Race 2: #3 Inno Century, #2 Groovy Feeling, #8 Dragon Four Seas, #1 Positive Smile

Race 3: #4 Fun N Fun Together, #1 Roman Crown, #3 Dragon Air Force, #10 Vulcanus

Race 4: #8 Invincible Lucky, #1 Sunny Da Best, #6 Flying Double, #7 Island Buddy

Race 5: #12 Lucky Fionn, #3 Fatal Blow, #5 Juneau Pride, #2 City Thunder

Race 6: #6 Monta Frutta, #12 Offroad Master, #9 Mojave Desert, #3 Stormi

Race 7: #12 Johannes Brahms, #6 Rubylot, #1 Packing Hermod, #4 Young Champion

Race 8: #6 Masterofmyuniverse, #12 Great State, #4 Lucky Eight, #1 Young Superstar

Race 9: #6 Markwin, #1 Mickley, #5 Steps Ahead, #8 Silvery Breeze

Race 10: #11 Glorious Success, #6 Packing Turbine, #14 Embraces, #4 Lo Rider

Race 1 - WU KAI SHA HANDICAP
#5 Flying Dragon can prove more competitive on his second attempt in the cellar grade, switching back to his best course and distance where all three of his career wins have come. With plenty of early speed expected, the race shape should suit his style. #6 Fung gets a significant jockey upgrade with Zac Purton taking over from an apprentice. On his first Class 5 outing, he led and gave a good sight before fading late into fourth. With that run under his belt, he's well-placed to improve. #2 Smart Leader drops back into Class 5, a grade where he boasts a strong record. Reunited with Keagan De Melo, who guided him to victory at this course and distance four starts ago, the 10-year-old can be in the mix. #11 Patch Of Watch had excuses last time, pulling up with blood in the trachea. From barrier 2 and with Brittney Wong's 10lb claim, he's well-drawn to improve his form.

Race 2 - WU KAU TANG HANDICAP
#3 Inno Century has been well-prepared for his Hong Kong debut, showing plenty of promise in his trials, the last two under Zac Purton, who sticks with the ride first-up. He looks capable of making an impact with a debut win. #2 Groovy Feeling outperformed market expectations on debut, finishing a close third to Super Legends. His pre-race trials were solid, and he should be a strong contender again with natural improvement. #8 Dragon Four Seas has been knocking on the door for his first career win, though the drop back to 1200m poses a slight query. His recent efforts have been encouraging, and he remains a chance. #1 Positive Smile drops into Class 4 after running well in recent outings at the bottom of Class 3. The rise in distance suits, and he's one to follow in this grade.

Race 3 - CHEK KENG HANDICAP
#4 Fun N Fun Together returns after being withdrawn from the barriers in late October due to a nasal injury sustained after rearing and striking his head. He's trialled well in preparation for this, and his last start second suggests he's ready to break through. #1 Roman Crown tries the Sha Tin all-weather track for the first time under race conditions, and with an unblemished record of two wins from two starts on dirt prior to import, he could thrive. #3 Dragon Air Force broke through convincingly last time out and remains a live winning chance in this contest. #10

Vulcanus secured his first victory in style in Class 5 two starts back and followed up with a fast-finishing second on the rise to Class 4. Barrier 12 presents a challenge, but Zac Purton's booking is a plus.

Race 4 - WU KAU TANG HANDICAP
#8 Invincible Lucky has been knocking on the door for a win, but wide draws have proven costly in both starts of this preparation. Now drawn favourably in barrier 3, his last-start second to Boom Box—an exciting horse on the rise—reads well for this contest. #1 Sunny Da Best was a good thing beaten last time when runner-up to Sky Joy after being badly held up from the 450m to the 200m. With a clear run, he's primed to bounce back. #6 Flying Double had barrier 13 to contend with last start and was ridden quietly before storming home into sixth, finishing strongly in the same race as Sunny Da Best. A better map is possible, but with barrier 12, he may adopt quiet tactics again. #7 Island Buddy comes out of a fast-run, strong-form race where he only faded late into sixth. His prior second-place effort was full of promise and suggests he's one to watch.

Race 5 - HUNG HOM BAY HANDICAP
#12 Lucky Fionn has finished runner-up in both starts this campaign, and his latest effort was particularly noteworthy as he was caught wide from the 900m but still went down by only a neck. #3 Fatal Blow won impressively two starts ago but had no luck last time, being forced to race wide from barrier 10. He has since trialled well and now moves into a much more favourable draw in barrier 3, from where he is ready to atone. #5 Juneau Pride has been knocking on the door with three consecutive placings and looks primed for a breakthrough win. He'll get every chance from barrier 2 if the race pans out in his favour. #2 City Thunder should appreciate the step up to 1400m after three solid runs over 1200m this preparation.

Race 6 - HUNG MUI KUK HANDICAP
#6 Monta Frutta returns to the all-weather, where he boasts strong form. First-up since a storming second to Packing Hermod last time he raced, he looks a genuine contender. #12 Offroad Master is building a solid record, with a win and a placing from three starts. He maps to get an ideal run from barrier 4, and the weight relief on the class rise makes him easy to like here. #9 Mojave Desert secured his first Hong Kong win in style last start, marking an impressive first start for trainer Mark Newnham. He should hold his form and remain competitive despite the step up in class. #3 Stormi is an interesting prospect second-up in Hong Kong. His quiet debut from a wide draw suggested improvement to come, and while he may prefer further based on overseas form, his excellent record on the Polytrack in Ireland hints that the switch to the all-weather will suit.

Race 7 - THE RACING CLUB CUP (HANDICAP)
#12 Johannes Brahms, a highly promising four-year-old on the Classic Mile trail, broke through for his first Hong Kong win in style last start. Carrying a big weight at the top of Class 3, he overcame significant adversity in the home straight to score impressively. #6 Rubylot, another Classic Mile hopeful, will be looking to turn the tables on Packing Hermod after finishing a close runner-up by a neck in their last meeting. #1 Packing Hermod is a serious talent on the rise, having won four of his five starts. A win here would solidify his Classic Mile credentials, but barrier 11 may prove sticky. #4 Young Champion is well-placed to bounce back to his best. He has trialled ideally between runs, and with Zac Purton taking over from barrier 3, he should receive every opportunity to run up to his early career form.

Race 8 - HEBE HAVEN HANDICAP

#6 Masterofmyuniverse can double up despite the rise in grade, having impressed with a sharp turn of foot to break his maiden last start on just his third attempt. This John Size-trained runner is on an upward trajectory with plenty of upside. #12 Great State is still chasing his first Hong Kong win and hasn't had much luck recently, but his third-place finish to Rubylot four starts ago is solid form for this contest. #4 Lucky Eight has been running well this season despite battling wide draws in his last three starts. A shift to barrier 4 should see him enjoy a much better trip. #1 Young Superstar has the tactical speed to get forward early and he will be suited by the rail being in the C+3 position, which can favour on-pace runners under the right race shape.

Race 9 - PAK SHEK AU HANDICAP

#6 Markwin, a standout from the Cody Mo stable, tackles the mile for the first time. Although beaten as an odds-on favourite last start, his effort had plenty of merit as he got too far back in a race favouring on-pace runners, finishing strongly to miss by just a head. This four-year-old restricted race shapes as a key marker for Classic Mile hopefuls. #1 Mickley had no luck at all last start, finishing 12th but only beaten four lengths after being completely held up in the straight with nowhere to go. A clearer passage here will see him rebound sharply. #5 Steps Ahead has never missed the frame in seven starts and continues to bolster his Classic Mile credentials. Another wide draw poses a challenge, but the long run to the first bend gives Jerry Chau time to find a position. #8 Silvery Breeze surprised with a debut win two starts ago and followed up with an eye-catching fifth, closing strongly from the widest barrier to finish just 1.75 lengths behind Mickley.

Race 10 - PAK TIN HANDICAP

#11 Glorious Success has made an impressive start in Hong Kong, securing two placings over 1400m, and his most recent third-place finish to Johannes Brahms is a strong formline for a race like this. The wide draw poses a challenge, but the rise to a mile looks well-timed. #6 Packing Turbine, after a fast-finishing sixth from a wide draw over 1200m on debut, settled closer to the pace from an inside draw in his second start, finishing third to Mickley over the mile. His first local win is on the horizon. #14 Embraces has clearly thrived since the switch to Cody Mo, following an easy two-length victory over the extended mile at Happy Valley last time. While this presents a tougher task rising to Class 3, he remains untapped and could have more to offer. #4 Lo Rider passed his Hong Kong debut with a seventh-place finish, beaten less than two lengths after being held up at the top of the straight. He can take another positive step forward here.