

Sha Tin Selections

(Sunday, April 27, 2025)

Race 1: #2 Beauty Viva, #3 Oriental Smoke, #1 Matsu Victor, #5 Volcanic Spark

Race 2: #3 Top Throne, #8 Diriya, #11 Runjeet, #2 Parterre

Race 3: #1 Super Express, #5 Monarch County, #2 Super Love, #4 Forerunner

Race 4: #2 Divano, #6 Invincible Shield, #5 Dancing Code, #4 Young Champion

Race 5: #1 Ka Ying Rising, #6 Helios Express, #2 Satono Reve, #3 Lucky Sweynesse

Race 6: #4 Masterofmyuniverse, #3 Geneva, #9 Akashvani, #5 Super Legends

Race 7: #1 Mr Brightside, #2 Voyage Bubble, #12 My Wish, #6 Galaxy Patch

Race 8: #2 Prognosis, #11 Liberty Island, #3 Tastiera, #5 El Vencedor

Race 9: #10 Family Jewel, #11 Magnificent Nine, #6 Star Mac, #14 Good Luck Babe

Race 10: #3 Silvery Breeze, #7 Stellar Swift, #2 Silo, #4 Endeared

Race 1 - FWD INSURANCE ACT PRIVATE HANDICAP

#2 Beauty Viva made his first attempt in Class 4 last time and was well supported into favourite. He mapped against the race shape but still ran on well into fifth, beaten only two and a half lengths. He has trialled well between runs and can make his mark now in a winnable race. #3 Oriental Smoke will map perfectly from barrier 3 and has been threatening to win since returning to Class 4, finishing in the money in three of his last four runs. He comes out of the same race as Beauty Viva where he closed off nicely for third. #1 Matsu Victor also comes through that race, finishing a head away in second. With Joao Moreira in the plate, his chances look strong. #5 Volcanic Spark draws perfectly in barrier 2 with James McDonald engaged to ride. Back to 1800m from 2000m suits his chances and though winless for 287 days, he has been turning in some encouraging efforts this season.

Race 2 - FWD INSURANCE GOAHEAD GROUP HANDICAP

#3 Top Throne was a luckless fourth on debut where he raced wide without cover but showed plenty of promise. He moved into barrier two second-up and broke through stylishly, looking like a horse going places. He now draws the widest and will need a bit of luck, but remains the one to beat. #8 Diriya draws perfectly in barrier 1 for his debut and his trials have been encouraging enough to suggest he can run a race first-up—Zac Purton in the saddle only boosts confidence. #11 Runjeet caught the eye on debut when given a quiet time out the back before closing strongly late. He has trialled well between runs up on the pace, and those tactics could be employed depending on how he steps from barrier 12. Second-up improvement is expected. #2 Parterre always warrants respect in this class as a three-time winner in the grade. This marks his third attempt back in Class 4 and he can go close under Joao Moreira's guidance.

Race 3 - FWD INSURANCE ICBC (ASIA) HANDICAP

#1 Super Express remains the one to beat after winning with plenty in hand at this course and distance on debut for the John Size stable, backing up a series of impressive barrier trials. He

did a bit wrong on that occasion but was still too classy, and he should only improve with more racing. #5 Monarch County looks to have turned a corner and has been a big improver since stepping up to 1400m. After a strong third on his first try at the trip two starts back, he broke through stylishly last time and has trialled well between runs, suggesting there's more to come. #2 Super Love backed up his maiden win at his second start with a closing third to Crossborderpegasus after being slow away. He now rises to 1400m for the first time, but a promising trial in between suggests he'll enjoy the extra ground. #4 Forerunner was up against it from a wide draw last start, but his prior two efforts are key—winning over Brilliant Express two starts back before a close second to Magnificent Nine.

Race 4 - FWD INSURANCE BOCOM HANDICAP

#2 Divano chases back-to-back wins following an impressive Class 1 victory at this course and distance over Patch Of Theta. Conditions do change here—dropping into Class 2 and carrying significantly more weight—but he's a progressive four-year-old who looks to map ideally from barrier 3 and has the services of Zac Purton. #6 Invincible Shield is shooting for a hat-trick after two dominant 1200m wins in Class 3. This is his first try at 1400m and first time in Class 2, so it's a fresh test, but he's clearly a horse on the rise and should get a kind run from barrier 1. #5 Dancing Code rolled forward and led at a strong tempo last start before fading late into fourth—a solid effort all things considered. His form reads well and barrier 4 ensures the right run again. #4 Young Champion was runner-up to Packing Hermod in the same race as Dancing Code and has improved since the blinkers went on. He still has upside and is in the mix in a highly competitive race.

Race 5 - THE CHAIRMAN'S SPRINT PRIZE

#1 Ka Ying Rising needs no introduction. Hong Kong's star galloper and the world's highest-rated sprinter has swept all before him in his past 11 starts, breaking the track record twice in his last three appearances. A slightly different set-up this time with international contenders back in the mix, but as he showed in December, he has their measure. #6 Helios Express has been the bridesmaid in five of his six runs this season—each time behind Ka Ying Rising—and third on the other occasion. If anyone is to get close again, it's John Size's ultra-consistent four-year-old. #2 Satono Reve returns to Sha Tin after finishing third in December's Hong Kong Sprint. He's since gone on to win the Takamatsunomiya Kinen at Chukyo in Japan and comes back to Hong Kong in peak form. #3 Lucky Sweynesse adds plenty of intrigue. The 16-time winner hasn't been seen since his Sprint Cup victory in April last year due to injury, and while it's a huge ask to return in a race like this, James McDonald rides, which only adds to the fascination.

Race 6 - FWD INSURANCE CCB (ASIA) HANDICAP

#4 Masterofmyuniverse was a horror watch last start—reluctant to jump, settling last in running before charging home into third after briefly being held up. The hood comes off, he moves into barrier 2 from 11, and Zac Purton is back in the saddle, with all signs pointing to a bounce-back win. #3 Geneva broke his Class 3 duck impressively last start after a couple of get-back, run-on efforts from wide draws since the class rise. He can be followed up on that win as he still appears to have points in hand. #9 Akashvani is a handy three-year-old on the rise and now finds himself in Class 3 where the competition stiffens, but he'll appreciate a kinder draw this time after jumping from gates 12 and 14 in both career runs—winning on debut before a neck second second-up. #5 Super Legends, from barrier 3 and with James McDonald aboard, shouldn't be overlooked. He maps to get the right run up on the pace and is not without hope.

Race 7 - THE FWD CHAMPIONS MILE

#1 Mr Brightside, Australia's superstar miler with 19 career wins—nine at Group 1 level—brings elite credentials into this race, including a close-up second to Romantic Warrior in the 2023 Cox Plate. He has the form on the board to win this and, having been the first overseas runner to arrive in Hong Kong, has had ample time to settle in and produce his best here. #2 Voyage Bubble has been nearly flawless this season, stamping himself as Hong Kong's premier miler–middle distance horse and setting the benchmark in this field without question. Drawn out in barrier 10 while some of his key rivals are drawn inside sets things up for a highly intriguing tactical battle. #12 My Wish was a good thing beaten in the Hong Kong Derby, drawing the outside gate, settling last, and unleashing a devastating final 400m sectional to miss by a short-head. While this is a tougher assignment in open company, Mark Newnham's star four-year-old is as genuine as they come, and this will serve as a valuable gauge heading into his five-year-old season. #6 Galaxy Patch has tested patience this term but gets a gear tweak here with cheekpieces and the tongue tie on for the first time. He's talented, but his racing pattern requires things to go his way in the run.

Race 8 - THE FWD QEII CUP

#2 Prognosis is a fascinating runner, having finished runner-up in this race the past two years behind Romantic Warrior and James McDonald. With Romantic Warrior absent this year, McDonald now sides with Prognosis as he chases a first Group 1 success at his seventh attempt. His global form stands up—most notably a second to Via Sistina in last year's Cox Plate—and if he's going to land that elusive Group 1 win, this shapes as his best opportunity. #11 Liberty Island, Japan's Triple Tiara winner, was wide throughout when eighth to Soul Rush and Romantic Warrior in the Dubai Turf. That was her first run since a strong second to Romantic Warrior in December's Hong Kong Cup, and she's open to sharp improvement second-up. #3 Tastiera returns to Sha Tin off the back of a brave third in the same Hong Kong Cup, where she was caught wide early and rolled forward to settle second. That effort sets her up well for this, and she's right in the mix. #5 El Vencedor arrives in arguably career-best form in New Zealand, chasing his fifth win on the bounce after leading and holding off a fast-finishing La Crique to claim back-to-back Bonecrusher Stakes. His on-pace pattern and the booking of Zac Purton are both major positives.

Race 9 - FWD INSURANCE NCB HANDICAP

#10 Family Jewel resumes at a track and distance where he's two from two. He was last seen closing in strongly for fourth behind Steps Ahead over 1800m, and that form has since stood up well. He's still searching for his first Class 3 win, but with Joao Moreira aboard from a mid-draw, he may not have to settle as far back as he has in the past, which should boost his chances of breaking through in the grade. #11 Magnificent Nine has had 17 attempts to win in Class 3 for seven placings, but he's been trending upward this season. Though untested at the mile, he draws well in barrier 2 and should enjoy a soft run in transit to be produced strongly entering the home straight. #6 Star Mac jumps from barrier 1 but typically gets back in the run—he comes into this off a strong third behind Sky Jewellery at this course and distance, which reads well. #14 Good Luck Babe steps back into Class 3 after an all-the-way win over this trip in Class 4. The four-year-old still has more to come, and while there could be more pressure this time, he doesn't necessarily have to lead.

Race 10 - FWD INSURANCE CMB WING LUNG BANK HANDICAP

#3 Silvery Breeze resumes off a 77-day break following a last-start fall in the home straight when sent out favourite. David Eustace's four-year-old has shown plenty of promise but has drawn no lower than gate 11 in three of his five Hong Kong starts, so resuming from an inside draw here off the back of a sharp trial sets things up nicely for a first-up success. #7 Stellar Swift is on the seven-day turnaround after closing well for third behind the up-and-comer South Star, despite being held up for some time in the straight. Barrier 11 is tricky, but his form is strong, and with any luck from out wide he's right in this. #2 Silo is another who'll need luck from a wide gate, but he looks ready to win when things fall into place, coming off a luckless first-up seventh where he was held up late. #4 Endeared reunites with Craig Williams, who steered him to victory two starts ago. He followed that up with a good run from barrier 10, closing into third behind Hong Lok Golf, and now moving into a mid-draw can see him settle closer in the run like he did when winning.