

RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL CLASSIC@2025.01.09

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 1, Gallops, 2400m, Turf, R120.000, 12:25GMT+2

Race Summary: SANTIAGO'S PRIDE and INSTANT ATTRACTION are closely matched on the form of a 1700m meeting, which the latter edged on 31 October. However, preference over this distance is for the former who is also 1kg better off on these revised terms. Stablemate THE MIGHTIEST is carded to run a few days earlier but will be competitive if taking her place in this line-up, as the step up to this trip should unlock improvement. ALAKANANI finished a well-beaten 4th last time over this distance and can take home another cheque.

Selections:

#3 Santiago's Pride, #8 Instant Attraction, #7 The Mightiest, #1 Alakanani

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 2, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R90.000, 13:00GMT+2

Race Summary: GAMER acquitted himself well in a stronger race over 1600m in his first post-maiden appearance and a repeat of that performance over this extended trip off an unchanged mark could suffice. Last-start winner FLAG BEARER should remain competitive under a 3-point penalty although SILENT TRIGGER is weighted to avenge that narrow recent defeat on 1kg better terms. CLEAR THE PATH, ANGEL'S WISH, FULL GO, and CARTAGENA complete the shortlist.

Selections:

#2 Gamer, #5 Silent Trigger, #3 Flag Bearer, #8 Full Go

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 3, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R125.000, 13:35GMT+2

Race Summary: A case can be made for every runner. Class-dropper TWO MILES WEST ought to fare better at this level off a reduced mark, while QUATERMAIN and DOUGLAS DRAGON will make their presence felt if taking their place. Both are carded to run a week earlier. EIGER SANCTION is unbeaten over this distance so shouldn't be underestimated on his return from a break. Last-start winners DJ JUNIOR and SILVANO'S SONG remain competitive despite resultant penalties. KUDZU, DARK SILVER, and ANOTHER UNIVERSE were narrowly beaten recently so wouldn't be winning out of turn.

Selections:

#7 Dark Silver, #5 Kudzu, #4 Dj Junior, #3 Eiger Sanction

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 4, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R100.000, 14:10GMT+2

Race Summary: AMERICAN REBEL bounced back to form with a good 3rd in a stronger course-and-distance event last time. Given the slight ease in grade, he need only repeat that performance off an unchanged mark to resume winning ways. OMBUDSMAN fits a similar profile and will be more competitive at this level off a reduced mark. Hard-knockers RISKY BUSINESS, GUY ALEXANDER, and VAVA VEGAS have the form and experience to play leading roles. Last-start maiden winner PRIMAL QUEST isn't taken lightly after landing a betting coup over 1450m on this course last month.

Selections:

#1 American Rebel, #5 Ombudsman, #3 Guy Alexander, #4 Primal Quest

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 5, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R100.000, 14:45GMT+2

Race Summary: Lightly raced SUTHERLAND acquitted himself well in defeat in a stronger race in late November and a repeat of that encouraging reappearance on handicap debut should suffice. Improving ONE MORE STAR and returning debut winner CORRUPT are unexposed 3YOs with scope for improvement, so they could threaten the selection. STREWN SKY, SALUTE THE FLAG and

PRESSONREGARDLESS have the form and experience to make their presence felt.

Selections:

#3 Sutherland, #6 One More Star, #7 Corrupt, #5 Pressonregardless

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 6, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R105.000, 15:20GMT+2

Race Summary: THERE SHE GOES has maintained her form and consistency at a higher handicap level so this ease in grade represents a good opportunity to end a 359-day wait for her 6th win. MICKE'S BOMB and TAKE YOUR PLACE boast solid and recent winning form so they could make life difficult for the selection. BOOM BOOM, SIGRID SWING, and TWICE AS WILD appeal most of the remainder.

Selections:

#3 There She Goes, #6 Take Your Place, #2 Micke's Bomb, #4 Boom Boom

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 7, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R135.000, 15:55GMT+2

Race Summary: Promising 3yo BAKWENA has an entry in a 1400m Grade 3 a few days earlier but if she sidesteps that engagement and takes her place it should pay to follow her. JUST BE LEKKER and ONE FELL SWOOP are classy fillies with the form and experience to be competitive. However, they concede chunks of weight to unexposed improving rivals, of which FOREVERINMYDREAMS and stable companion POINTER make the most appeal. ANDI'S GIRL and SIMPLY MAJESTIC aren't underestimated.

Selections:

#5 Bakwena, #7 Foreverinmydreams, #1 Just Be Lekker, #6 Pointer

Vaal Classic, 09.01.2025, Race 8, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R100.000, 16:30GMT+2

Race Summary: SUPER AWESOME took advantage of a career-low rating by bouncing back to form with a close-up 3rd over 1450m in a similar contest on this track last month. He is equally effective over this shorter trip so, off an unchanged mark from a favourable draw looks good value to end a 476-day wait for a 3rd career win. Last-start course-and-distance winner PENDRAGON, runner-up ALONE TIME (1kg better off) and veteran hard-knocker WRITTEN IN STONE (2kg better off) are closely matched on these terms and they won't be far off the mark. However, a bigger threat over 1200m may be posed by HAMMIE'S HERO.

Selections:

#1 Super Awesome, #4 Hammies Hero, #3 Alone Time, #7 Written In Stone

Best Win: #3 SUTHERLAND

Best Value Bet: #7 DARK SILVER

Best Longshot: #7 DARK SILVER