

RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL CLASSIC@2026.01.08

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 1, Gallops, 1800m, Turf, R95.000, 12:15GMT+2

Race Summary: BLOOD OF EDEN is knocking loudly at the door of a maiden win and won't need to improve much on recent performances to open her account. HUBERTUS HUNT and COMIC ARTIST fit a similar profile so shouldn't be too far off the action. CHICKASAW and RED ENCHANTRESS have the form and experience to also acquit themselves competitively.

Selections:

#3 Blood Of Eden, #4 Hubertus Hunt, #5 Chickasaw, #7 Comic Artist

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 2, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R105.000, 12:50GMT+2

Race Summary: DELAWARE RIVER would not be winning out of turn after consecutive seconds recently, including one over track and trip. BRIGITTE ANNE is open to improvement over this extended trip after 3 pleasing sprints, so she must be taken seriously. LANTERI and THE REASON also have scope for improvement and could make their presence felt.

Selections:

#4 Delaware River, #6 Brigitte Anne, #13 The Reason, #5 Lanteri

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 3, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R120.000, 13:25GMT+2

Race Summary: GO JOHNNY GO caught the eye when a fast-finishing 2nd over track and trip last time. He won't need to improve much on that performance in first-time cheekpieces to go one better. SHOREYBOMBA is closely matched on that form so shouldn't be far off the mark. LANCE ALOT finished ahead of that rival last time so also warrants respect. However, POMPEII SHIELD could pose a bigger threat if building on the promise of a pleasing debut 4th over 1200m. HIGHWAYMAN HARRY and returning ERROL FLYNN complete the shortlist.

Selections:

#9 Go Johnny Go, #2 Pompeii Shield, #4 Shoreybomba, #3 Lance Alot

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 4, Gallops, 1800m, Turf, R120.000, 14:00GMT+2

Race Summary: NARETOI has thrived on the Highveld and wouldn't be winning out of turn after consecutive seconds. EMERALD CITY fits a similar profile after back-to-back seconds over 2400m but is probably most effective over further, whereas JAFFA has given the impression that this trip will be right up his alley. Filly WAR TALK and lightly raced THOONSIL have the form and experience to play leading roles too.

Selections:

#13 Jaffa, #9 Thoonsil, #1 Naretoi, #15 War Talk

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 5, Gallops, 1800m, Turf, R130.000, 14:35GMT+2

Race Summary: COPPER EAGLE was raised 12 points for finishing 5th in a 3yo Grade 2 last time and he remains open to improvement over this extended trip. READ ALL ABOUT IT has finished close-up in recent starts over 2000m and will likely play another leading role. However, preference is for GERBERA who races off an unchanged mark after finishing 3rd in a Listed race over the same trip. Consistent KUDZU and lightly raced ENFLAME also have earning potential.

Selections:

#5 Gerbera, #6 Read All About It, #7 Copper Eagle, #2 Kudzu

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 6, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R135.000, 15:15GMT+2

Race Summary: LITTLEMISSMILLION lost her unbeaten record but was far from disgraced when staying on to finish 5th in a Grade 3 Fillies Mile for 3yo last time. She races off an unchanged mark and would have tightened up with that comeback outing so could improve to resume winning ways. BAKWENA, ACCEPT COOKIES, ACROSS THE POND and IT'S HER WAY have the form and experience at this level to make life difficult for their younger rival. FAMOUS LADY, STREISAND and WARNING SOUND are better than their recent displays suggest and could get into the picture on their best form. Last-start winner BOOM BOOM has claims too.

Selections:

#9 Littlemissmillion, #4 Bakwena, #3 Accept Cookies, #5 It's Her Way

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 7, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R105.000, 15:50GMT+2

Race Summary: Well-related SPECIAL STAR has improved with each outing and remains open to further improvement on her reappearance. Recent maiden scorers TOP SHELF TEDDY and AMAZON QUEEN also have scope for progress so are probably better than rated. OPERA FAN has bounced back to form recently and is on a competitive mark, so she shouldn't be underestimated. Hard-knockers SIGRID SWING and PRETTY ANALIA cannot be discounted at this level either.

Selections:

#4 Special Star, #6 Amazon Queen, #2 Sigrid Swing, #8 Opera Fan

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 8, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R112.500, 16:25GMT+2

Race Summary: CAPE SAFFRON won at this level recently and a 3-point penalty isn't likely to prevent another bold showing. Consistent PRINCESS ILARIA is versatile and competitive off her current mark, so she could fight out the finish. VAMANOS acquitted herself well on handicap debut over 1200m and this longer trip could be more to her liking. PRINCESS KEIRA and LADY BLUNT showed their form and well-being last time and will make their presence felt if repeating those performances. ARASHI isn't taken lightly either off her career-low mark.

Selections:

#4 Cape Saffron, #3 Princess Ilaria, #7 Vamanos, #1 Arashi

Vaal Classic, 08.01.2026, Race 9, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R100.000, 16:50GMT+2

Race Summary: INSPIRATION was a wide-margin winner of an 1160m maiden and remains open to improvement. She is probably better than her current mark so is taken to follow up on handicap debut. Fellow last-start scorer WESTERN WISHES won a stronger race over track and trip last time, so she is best kept onside despite an unfavourable wide draw. PALACE REVOLT and PROPHET are closely matched on recent form and both have the means to trouble the aforementioned fillies. NEVER NEVER LAND could enjoy cutting back in distance and may get the run of the race from gate No 1.

Selections:

#2 Inspiration, #4 Western Wishes, #3 Never Never Land, #7 Palace Revolt

Best Win: #3 BLOOD OF EDEN

Best Value Bet: #9 LITTLEMISSMILLION

Best Longshot: #9 LITTLEMISSMILLION