

RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL@2026.04.21

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 1, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R130.000, 12:35GMT+2

Race Summary: NORTHUMBERLAND finished comfortably ahead of JAN FISKAAL and MFULATHELA when finishing 3rd over track and trip on debut. With that experience under the belt and natural improvement expected, it could pay to follow his progress. Well-bred newcomers RAPTOR KING and SANDS OF VALHALLA are worth a market check and could pose a threat, especially if the betting speaks in their favour. BILLION STARS is another to keep an eye on.

Selections:

#10 Northumberland, #11 Raptor King, #12 Sands Of Valhalla, #5 Egremont

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 2, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R120.000, 13:10GMT+2

Race Summary: ALICE B TOKLAS caught the eye when a fast-finishing 3rd on debut over this course and distance. She would have benefitted from that experience and won't need to improve much - if at all - to confirm that promise and open her account. PLATINUM SHAY has a bit to find on that form but is weighted to pose more of a threat on 2.5kg better terms. The newcomers PISTA RESISTANCE, PLEASURE SEEKING and STORM AVALANCHE are well-bred fillies worth a market check on debut. Follow the betting moves!

Selections:

#1 Alice B Toklas, #5 Platinum Shay, #7 Storm Avalanche, #6 Pleasure Seeking

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 3, Gallops, 1800m, Turf, R120.000, 13:45GMT+2

Race Summary: POMPEII SHIELD has been costly to follow recently but he is open to improvement over this extended trip so could reward supporters. He had excuses last time when finishing behind ROYALE JACKET but that rival's consistency and experience over the distance could give him the edge. ASIAH'S TIARA was an improved 2nd last time and ought to have a say in the outcome with the headgear worn that day unsurprisingly retained. TWELTH OF NEVER and GREENSIDE GIRL have more scope than most so can't be underestimated either.

Selections:

#1 Royale Jacket, #3 Pompeii Shield, #6 Asiah's Tiara, #4 Twelfth Of Never

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 4, Gallops, 1800m, Turf, R105.000, 14:20GMT+2

Race Summary: VIXENINTHEVINEYARD and COOL REGGAE are closely matched on the form of their recent meetings. Both have the credentials to fight out the finish, though could be vulnerable to less-exposed younger rivals. GIMMESUMLUV and STORM BALLETT have shown enough to be competitive and remain open to improvement stretching out to this distance for the first time. CHARIKLO and stablemate BE MY FATE should make their presence felt too, as the step up to this trip will likely unlock further improvement.

Selections:

#5 Vixeninthevineyard, #4 Cool Reggae, #7 Be My Fate, #1 Chariklo

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 5, Gallops, 2400m, Turf, R125.000, 14:55GMT+2

Race Summary: DAMOVA, even as a 7yo mare, looked better than ever when winning over this trip last time. She won a little easier than the margin of victory suggests so a 5-point penalty may not be enough to prevent her from following up off a career-high mark. Runner-up ONE MORE STAR is 1kg better off so should pose a threat again. Last-start winner FUTUREWOLFF, class-dropper BATTLEGROUNDS and EUPHRATES will fight out the minors.

Selections:

#3 Damova, #2 One More Star, #5 Futurewolff, #1 Battleground

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 6, Gallops, 1400m, Turf, R130.000, 15:30GMT+2

Race Summary: GOLDEN OPERATOR impressed when winning in first-time blinkers over a similar trip recently and he remains open to further improvement with the headgear retained. However, a 6-point penalty for that last-start victory tilts the scales in favour of KING HARALD, who beat the former in an earlier meeting over 1600m and is weighted to confirm that superiority on 0.5kg better terms. WILD INTENT is slung in under the conditions but unlikely to be fully tuned after a 136-day absence. ECHO CHECK is lightly raced and could improve to get his career back on track.

Selections:

#1 King Harald, #2 Golden Operator, #3 Wild Intent, #4 Echo Check

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 7, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R135.000, 16:05GMT+2

Race Summary: RACHEL WALL was an eye-catching 3rd on her reappearance in a Grade 3 over 1160m last time and a repeat of that performance off an unchanged mark, with improved fitness on her side, should suffice at this level. KOMATI RIVER and CALANTHA are held on that form but better off on the revised weight terms. The latter could also improve with blinkers fitted for the first time. BLIZZARD SNOW, ROAMING SPIRIT and returning GREEN FLASH have the means to make their presence felt too.

Selections:

#2 Rachel Wall, #3 Calantha, #6 Roaming Spirit, #7 Blizzard Snow

Vaal, 21.04.2026, Race 8, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R105.000, 16:40GMT+2

Race Summary: CAROLINE ISLAND concedes weight to all but will likely play a leading role back in same-sex company off a reduced mark. MISS NOVAX has good 1200m record so will relish dropping back to this trip. She should fight out the finish eased in grade off a slightly lower rating. LOVABLE, QUIET WINTER, WISE COUNSEL and ROYAL KAILANI have more scope than most and could get into the picture with any improvement. VALIEVA and SIGRID SWING are honest hard knockers with earning potential too.

Selections:

#2 Miss Novax, #1 Caroline Island, #7 Lovable, #3 Wise Counsel

Best Win: #2 RACHEL WALL

Best Value Bet: #2 MISS NOVAX

Best Longshot: #2 MISS NOVAX