

RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL CLASSIC@2025.12.23

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 1, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R105.000, 12:15GMT+2

Race Summary: WINDS OF GRACE has been costly to follow but deserves to break her duck after several near misses. GALAXY QUEEN and HUBERTUS HUNT finished close-up last time and they wouldn't need to improve a great deal to make life difficult for the selection. SHADOWLINE, MADE TO MEASURE and IN BETWEEN have scope to improve, so they could get into the picture too.

Selections:

#1 Winds Of Grace, #4 Galaxy Queen, #3 Hubertus Hunt, #10 Shadowline

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 2, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R120.000, 12:50GMT+2

Race Summary: LANCE ALOT improved to finish ahead of MILAN'S WORLD over track and trip last time, and he should confirm his superiority on 4kg better terms in his peak outing. SHOREYBOMBA, ONE OF THOSE DAYS and GAVIUS MAXIMUS are closely matched on the form of a recent 1450m meeting at this venue. They are improving and should have more to offer over this extended trip. Filly BABETTE'S FEAST gets weight from those rivals so shouldn't be taken lightly. COPPER CLIFF was backed at long odds when a fast-finishing 3rd over 1500m last time and this distance could be more to his liking.

Selections:

#7 Lance Alot, #1 Milan's World, #10 Shoreybomba, #9 One Of Those Days

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 3, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R105.000, 13:25GMT+2

Race Summary: Thriving NKWENKWEZI and progressive BELLEROPHON have the form and experience to fight out the finish, but both are engaged to run at an earlier meeting which casts doubt over their participation. Last-start winner SKY PILLAR ROCK and veteran hard-knocker BANHA BRIDGE ought to remain competitive, so too should CASUS BELLI who has found form dropped in the ratings. EIFFEL TOWER and INSTANT ATTRACTION have earning potential too.

Selections:

#1 Nkwenkwezi, #3 Sky Pillar Rock, #4 Banha Bridge, #6 Bellerophon

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 4, Gallops, 1500m, Turf, R100.000, 14:00GMT+2

Race Summary: FATHER CHRISTMAS and PRINCE OF KILDARE are closely matched on their 1450m meeting in October. The latter is 0.5kg better off but the former is open to improvement in his peak outing so can uphold that form. Thriving LADY BLUNT, last-start maiden winner FORCE PUBLIQUE and unexposed ELUSIVE RED also have the means to make their presence felt. Highveld newcomer EXPRESS YOURSELF isn't underestimated on his reappearance.

Selections:

#3 Father Christmas, #6 Prince Of Kildare, #1 Johnny Drama, #9 Force Publique

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 5, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R135.000, 14:35GMT+2

Race Summary: Several with chances in a small but competitive lineup, but a chance is taken on consistent PRINCESS ILARIA (unbeaten over track and trip) capitalising off a slightly reduced mark. Class-droppers THAT'S MY BABY, stablemate TINA LOVELACE, HONG KONG and LADY SABRINA boast solid form credentials too. Bottom-weight LET'S GO LOLA is also dangerous to discount. FRANCILIEN has both the form and experience at this level to stake a claim but this trip is at the very end of her range.

Selections:

#8 Princess Ilaria, #1 That's My Baby, #6 Lady Sabrina, #3 Tina Lovelace

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 6, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R105.000, 15:15GMT+2

Race Summary: FIRE IN HER SOUL fluffed her lines in a 3yo feature last time but is 2.5kg better off with last-start winner SARAGOSSA CAT on earlier 1400m form, so there shouldn't be much separating the pair on these terms. However, the latter continues to improve and will have more to offer over this extended trip. Fellow recent scorers INTO DANCING and DONDOYAKI have more to do on handicap debut but could get a look in. Hard-knocker WHIRLYBIRD and maturing 3yo ZAHRA DOMINIA should pose more of a threat.

Selections:

#3 Saragossa Cat, #6 Fire In Her Soul, #4 Whirlybird, #7 Into Dancing

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 7, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R135.000, 15:50GMT+2

Race Summary: MANYELETI was beaten for the first time recently but she lost little in defeat behind an experienced rival to whom she conceded weight. She is the least exposed of these runners and won't need to improve much to get back to winning ways. Fellow 3yo fillies ALPINE JET, MISS NOVAX and MYSTICAL MISS also have scope for improvement. Older duo GREEN FLASH and ROAMING SPIRIT (blinker strike) have the form and experience to acquit themselves competitively too.

Selections:

#7 Manyeleti, #4 Green Flash, #6 Roaming Spirit, #5 Alpine Jet

Vaal Classic, 23.12.2025, Race 8, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R105.000, 16:25GMT+2

Race Summary: Well-related TEMPRANILLO was impressive when winning her maiden last time and could follow up with further progress expected. MAVERICK QUEEN is engaged to run at an earlier meeting but has won 2 of her last 3 starts, so she'll likely play a leading role if taking her place. On their 13 November clash, aptly named familiar foe SEASON'S GREETINGS will have a role to play on 2kg better terms. CRYSTAL COVE, DEAL MAKER, CLAIRWOOD ROSE and WAITING ON CHARLIE complete the shortlist.

Selections:

#8 Tempranillo, #2 Maverick Queen, #1 Season's Greetings, #5 Deal Maker

Best Win: #7 MANYELETI

Best Value Bet: #8 PRINCESS ILARIA

Best Longshot: #8 PRINCESS ILARIA