

RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL CLASSIC@2025.07.24

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 1, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R80.000, 11:50GMT+2

Race Summary: EMPRESS WU is overdue a maiden victory and she wouldn't be winning out of turn after 4 consecutive second-place finishes. TRAIL RUNNER has the form and experience to fight out the finish and recently gelded youngster FIRE STARTER won't need to improve much over this shorter trip to make his presence felt too. SHIMMERING and SUPERIOR could also have roles to play.

Selections:

#3 Empress Wu, #1 Trail Runner, #4 Shimmering, #2 Fire Starter

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 2, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R80.000, 12:22GMT+2

Race Summary: TRIP TO STATES was a well-beaten second last time but needs only to repeat that performance over this extended trip to play another leading role. CODEWORD finished a career-best second in this headgear 3 weeks ago under the same rider and could fight for victory if confirming that improvement. JOHNNY DRAMA, GIFT OF ROYAL and youngster WINCHESTER appeal most of the remainder.

Selections:

#5 Trip To States, #4 Codeword, #6 Winchester, #1 Johnny Drama

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 3, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R85.000, 12:54GMT+2

Race Summary: WAR REPORTER confirmed the improvement of his previous outing by finishing 2nd off this mark over 1800m recently. He should go well again over a course and distance he is unbeaten. Hard-knocker LAUGHING WILLIAM bounced back to form last time and could be hard to peg back if adopting similar tactics. Rating-droppers TRIDENT KING and PANNING GOLD aren't taken lightly off their current marks but are vulnerable to less-exposed younger rivals. Last-start scorer TOMMY SHELBY and debut winner COPPER EAGLE are promising 2yo colts with scope to improve over this extended trip that should suit.

Selections:

#7 Copper Eagle, #8 Tommy Shelby, #2 War Reporter, #3 Laughing William

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 4, Gallops, 1000m, Turf, R110.000, 13:26GMT+2

Race Summary: Consistent KIA KAHA fared slightly better than COSMIC QUEEN in a stronger 1000m race last time but the latter was drawn wide around the turn that day and with any improvement should turn the tables. BOSUM BUDDY had legitimate excuses for a disappointing last start and shouldn't be underestimated on her Highveld return. STARS AND BRA'S isn't taken lightly either off her reduced mark. Recent scorer GLOBAL THUNDER (up in class) and speedy VIRGINIA BEACH come next.

Selections:

#1 Cosmic Queen, #5 Kia Kaha, #2 Bosum Buddy, #4 Stars And Bra's

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 5, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R85.000, 14:05GMT+2

Race Summary: FALCON STRIKE took advantage of a drop in the ratings when winning last time and a 4-point penalty isn't likely to prevent another forward showing. However, runner-up ALONE TIME is 1.5kg better off so he could avenge that 1.10-length defeat. Well-bred Highveld newcomer PEREGRINE FALCON shouldn't be underestimated on his reappearance off a career-low mark. Hard-knockers SAIL THE SKY and PHALA MILLIONS have the form and experience at this level to also acquit themselves competitively.

Selections:

#3 Alone Time, #4 Falcon Strike, #1 Peregrine Falcon, #8 Phala Millions

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 6, Gallops, 2400m, Turf, R100.000, 14:40GMT+2

Race Summary: Progressive LAVA LAMP and the thriving CARTAGENA are weighted to be competitive. Both last-start winners should remain competitive off their revised marks, though preference is for the latter whose experience over this distance will stand her in good stead. Mares DAMOVA and POMOZELOUS, recent 2400m maiden winner GOLD DE GRACE, and hard-knockers THE MERCIFUL and RAINY SEASON are also capable of getting involved. ARCTIC SILVER finished third in her sole 2400m appearance at a higher level and won her only start on this course, so she isn't taken lightly either.

Selections:

#7 Cartagena, #4 Lava Lamp, #2 Artic Silver, #1 Order Of Hope

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 7, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R80.000, 15:15GMT+2

Race Summary: This won't take much winning. Top-weight SNEAK PREVIEW will appreciate the step up to this distance and is worth siding with off her career-low mark. HAT FURIOUS, RED SPARROW and STOP THE TRAFFIC have performed moderately since opening their accounts but aren't underestimated off their reduced marks. CREPUSCOLO, KISS OF FIRE and CIRCLE OF GRACE have earning potential too.

Selections:

#1 Sneak Preview, #2 Hat Furious, #3 Red Sparrow, #4 Crepuscolo

Vaal Classic, 24.07.2025, Race 8, Gallops, 1450m, Turf, R75.000, 15:50GMT+2

Race Summary: Youngster RED AMBER got going late to finish a close-up third in a stronger race over 1400m against male opposition last time and this extended trip will be more to her liking. She'll be hard to beat off a reduced mark and against female-only rivals. Lightly raced GHOSTBUSTER will likely pose the biggest threat, as she remains open to improvement on her return from a break. SHEETS AND GOGGLES, LADY LOXTON, and hard-knockers GOLDEN ASPEN, NORTHERN KITTEN and CAN'T CATCH ME complete the shortlist.

Selections:

#4 Red Amber, #5 Ghostbuster, #6 Sheets And Goggles, #9 Lady Loxton

Best Win: #4 RED AMBER

Best Value Bet: #7 COPPER EAGLE

Best Longshot: #7 COPPER EAGLE