

RACE BY RACE PREVIEWS: VAAL@2025.08.26

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 1, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R105.000, 12:35GMT+2

Race Summary: OLYMPIAN GOLD caught the eye when a fast-finishing 2nd over this trip earlier this month. He won't need to improve much on that performance to open his account. Year-old FRERE JACQUES would've benefitted from his comeback 4th over 1400m and could have more to offer over this extended trip, especially with cheekpieces and a tongue-tie fitted. BEACH WALKER outran market expectations when finishing ahead of that rival last time but could confirm that improvement and have a say in the outcome. TRIP TO PEACE and newcomer KING OF SILK complete the shortlist.

Selections:

#11 Olympian Gold, #4 Frere Jacques, #6 Beach Walker, #7 Trip To Peace

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 2, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R80.000, 13:10GMT+2

Race Summary: CARNARVON, even under top weight, is unlikely to get a better chance to break his duck. CAPTAIN FRANK, NEW LIFE and KING BLUETOOTH could chase him home in that order.

Selections:

#1 Carnarvon, #2 Captain Frank, #3 New Life, #4 King Bluetooth

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 3, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R80.000, 13:45GMT+2

Race Summary: EMPRESS WU will be hard to beat if taking her place in the lineup. She is engaged to run at an earlier meeting so her participation in this could be in doubt. Experienced maidens CYBER SPIRIT, CONCORDIA and BELLA BOOP BOOP have shown enough to be competitive and complete the Quartet positions.

Selections:

#1 Empress Wu, #3 Concordia, #2 Cyber Spirit, #4 Bella Boop Boop

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 4, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R80.000, 14:20GMT+2

Race Summary: HEROIC ACT has been knocking loudly at the door of a maiden victory and could be rewarded for his efforts, especially as his best performances have come over this distance. Stablemate INCLUSION returns from a layoff but is unexposed and remains open to improvement. Maturing EMBER KING was an encouraging 3rd over 1500m last time and should have a role to play if as effective over this extended trip. THAT'S MAGICAL wasn't disgraced in a handicap against winners last time and should fare better back in a maiden.

Selections:

#2 Heroic Act, #5 Ember King, #1 Inclusion, #7 That's Magical

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 5, Gallops, 2000m, Turf, R100.000, 14:55GMT+2

Race Summary: GIMMEACHOICE got going late last time when a fast-finishing 3rd over 1800m at this venue and, on that evidence, this extended trip will be more to his liking. GUY ALEXANDER finished ahead of that rival but is 4.5kg worse off so unlikely to confirm that form. TRIDENT KING is closely matched with the selection and should be hot on his heels again. Veteran BANHA BRIDGE is proven at this level and has the means to make his presence felt too.

Selections:

#2 Gimmeachoice, #4 Trident King, #1 Banha Bridge, #6 Storm Ahead

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 6, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R95.000, 15:30GMT+2

Race Summary: Stablemates RED PENNY and EIGHT HATS contested features last season during promising 2yo campaigns and both are open to improvement this term. However, they concede weight to maturing older rival XENOPHON. The well-bred latter is also on an upward trajectory and could represent Each-way value. BOSUM BUDDY, PENNSYLVANIA and versatile HONG KONG (blinker strike!) aren't taken lightly.

Selections:

#8 Xenophon, #6 Eight Hats, #5 Red Penny, #3 Hong Kong

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 7, Gallops, 1200m, Turf, R80.000, 16:10GMT+2

Race Summary: Promising PALACE PRINCE acquitted himself well at a higher level of the handicap as a 2yo last season so this ease in grade (off a slightly reduced mark) represents a good opportunity for him to resume winning ways. Last-start winners TIME WILL TELL and JET CAT should be competitive for Swinger and Exacta berths, while hard-knockers TOGETHER AGAIN, ORIENTAL BOUQUET and STROKE OF MERCY are others to consider for Trifecta and Quartet bets.

Selections:

#3 Palace Prince, #2 Time Will Tell, #9 Oriental Bouquet, #8 Stroke Of Mercy

Vaal, 26.08.2025, Race 8, Gallops, 1600m, Turf, R85.000, 16:45GMT+2

Race Summary: Veteran hard-knocker AFTER HOURS defied a 3-point penalty for winning at this level by following up against stronger opposition last time and a further 4-point rise back in this grade is unlikely to prevent him from completing the hat-trick. COPPOLA, class-dropper PANNING GOLD, hard-knockers FLAG BEARER and GAMER, as well as consistent ZOOMBOMBER all have earning potential. However, a bigger threat to the selection will likely come from COMMANDER OF ALL who stayed on to finish a close-up 3rd last time and is 2kg better off with his last-start conqueror for a 2.05-length beating.

Selections:

#1 After Hours, #12 Commander Of All, #3 Coppola, #9 Gamer

Best Win: #1 CARNARVON

Best Value Bet: #8 XENOPHON

Best Longshot: #8 XENOPHON