

# Today's racing at Epsom racecourse

11 September 2025



This afternoon's first race is a two-year-olds' seven-furlong novice (1.37). Each of the seven runners have been seen before, with the best currently presenting as Ollie Sangster's Red Tsarina, who won a fillies' race at Chelmsford most recently. She makes her turf debut today, while the best with turf form is St Anton, who placed on debut at Newmarket and will be a big player once again.

*Courtesy of Boyle Sports, who provide all the latest **horse racing odds**.*

Next is a seven-furlong handicap (2.12). Rod Millman's Cypriot Diaspora seeks a hat-trick, having won her last two starts at Ffos Las, but may not be so well suited to this track, so it may pay to look elsewhere. Dylan Cunha's Valley Of the Kings went well over course and distance last time out and, running off the same mark again, could pick up at least a place, but David O'Meara's 10-year-old veteran Orbaan looks the most likely candidate given his good track record and recent strain of form.

Race three is a handicap over a mile and a quarter (2.47). Racing Demon should have a good chance after a recent pair of places and the addition of a visor for today. Didaar also should be able to run a good race off the same mark which saw him place last time at Ffos Las, and has a useful five pounds from his rider. Questionable could be the winner, though, now just one pound above his last winning mark.

The Jump Jockeys Derby is next - a handicap over a mile and a half (3.18). Balhambar could have a good chance for Paul O'Brien, now two pounds below his last run on the Flat, in which he finished a respectable third of 11 last October. Returning from a break, he could win this, but will have to watch out for Alan King's Westerton, who has dipped down to a very workable mark.

Race five is another handicap over a mile and a half, this time for three-year-olds (3.53). Owen Burrows' Girls Night Out could go well, having come down a couple of pounds in the weights. She is ridden by a five-pound claimer, which helps her case. Drawn next door, though, is Love You Back, who makes more appeal with a good bit of course form from July and a workable mark for Gary and Josh Moore.

The penultimate race is a handicap run over the extended mile (4.25). Another for Gary and Josh Moore, Oj Lifestyle goes well at this track and is on a mark which should lend itself to winning here. Magical Merlin could run for a place under claiming rider Millie Wonnacott, while Beau Jardine could do the same from the innermost draw.

Last of all is another handicap over the same trip, this time for three-year-olds (5.00). Nigel Tinkler's Amidst The Chaos travels a long way for this and seeks a hat-trick today, while Pink Azalea - who also has a long drive from Malton to Epsom - looks more likely on a mark which may be winnable from under a five-pound claimer.

## **Epsom selections - Thursday:**

1.37 - St Anton

2.12 - Orbaan

2.47 - Questionable

3.18 - Balhambar

3.53 - Love You Back

4.25 - Oj Lifestyle

5.00 - Pink Azalea

Horses racing Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

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## **Should Epsom's Derby revert to Wednesday?**

11 September 2025



Epsom-based trainer: make the Derby “London’s Race” as town’s training revival gathers pace

### **“There’s a genuine feel that Epsom is back on the map”**

Epsom-based trainer George Baker says the town is poised for a racing revival and has urged The Jockey Club to reposition the Derby as “London’s Race”. Baker, who trains from Downs House “a furlong from the Derby start”, told Boyle Sports that Epsom’s facilities are comparable with Lambourn, Middleham and Newmarket and that the missing ingredient is simply more horses in training.

Baker points to the recent investment and new capacity at Downs House and Jim Boyle’s redeveloped South Hatch yard as signs of renewal: “There’s a genuine feel that you can have good horses trained at Epsom again.”

### **Call to engage London — and fill the yards**

With “a huge catchment area over the hill called London,” Baker says his team will be “rolling the dice” at upcoming sales and persuading owners to put horses into training at Epsom. Jockey Club Estates highlights the gallops’ proximity to the capital and the convenience of the Epsom Downs facilities.

### **Attendance slump sharpens focus on Derby’s future**

Baker argues the Derby needs a reset after a tough year for crowds. Official figures for the 2025 Betfred Derby put paid attendance at 22,312 — a modern-era low and down on 2024 — even as TV audiences remained significant.

### **Midweek return mooted**

Baker suggests returning the Classic to a weekday. Historically, the Derby ran on a Wednesday until 1994, before moving to Saturday in 1995, and he believes a midweek slot would give the race clear air and avoid clashes with other major sport.

### **“Make it Epsom’s party”**

His prescription: “strip it back”, keep the Hill accessible and festive — “come for free... bring a picnic, have a bet” — and aim to make the 250th running in 2029 a city-wide celebration drawing London “up the hill”.

### **Deep roots: Churchill and Epsom’s heyday**

Epsom’s heritage includes Sir Winston Churchill’s long association with South Hatch trainer Walter Nightingall and periods when hundreds of horses were stabled and trained around the Downs. In the 1950s around 800 horses were said to be in training on the Epsom Downs.

### **Who actually holds the Downs’ long lease?**

The long lease underpinning Epsom’s training grounds dates to 1969, when a 999-year lease of Walton Downs was granted to the Horserace Betting Levy Board to secure the future of training on the Downs, with management overseen via the Training Grounds Management Board. This is often conflated with The Jockey Club, but the leaseholder is the Levy Board.

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Editor’s note: EET requested comment from The Jockey Club on 3 September 2025. No reply had been received at the time of publication.

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## **Sutton and Epsom rugby season opener**

11 September 2025



Having enjoyed their first winning season since lifting the Level 5 title in 2018-19 Sutton approached this new campaign with renewed vigour, optimism and purpose.

The opening fixture was a delight for those with a sense of history. It may have been the first league encounter with Bromley, but they were originally the formidable Catford Bridge who first crossed swords with Sutton in 1897. Bromley had gained a thoroughly deserved promotion from Counties 1 Kent by avenging their opening day defeat at Ashford with a final day 22-7 win over the Toucans. It was a notable campaign with only two other losses, against the second strings of Canterbury and Sevenoaks, and a draw at Dover. Indeed, Sevenoaks II lost their last three matches including a crucial 28-30 epic against Bromley. On this opening afternoon of the new season it was Sutton who excelled, running in eight tries in a 49-19 win.

## First half dominance

Agu Benson was the only debutant in the Black and White ranks. Bromley were weakened by a wedding but could still call upon the experience of centurions Hawkins, Scott and the Griffiths brothers. On a sunny but breezy afternoon at the Warman Sports Club the hosts kicked off against the genteel backdrop of Hayes CC 2nd XI v Chislehurst CC 2nd XI.

With the regular pitch unavailable the home team dominated early possession and territory despite playing against the slope. The pattern of the game in the opening ten minutes was excellent continuity by the Kent team being neutered in the Surrey 22 by aggressive and organised defence. Almost the visitors' first visit into the hosts' territory resulted in a penalty. Tom Lennard, making his 50th league appearance and deputising in the kicking duties for the absent Bunting, made it 3-0.

The opening try followed a bizarre incident. A long Lennard clearance went straight to an opponent on halfway but its trajectory was in perfect alignment with the sun. The catcher lost sight of the ball which struck his shoulder, ricocheted and rolled into the in-goal area for a Sutton 5-metre scrum. Grateful for the celestial assistance Sutton scored as Gareth O'Brien jinked through the defence. The Rugby Lane men led 8-0 but soon offered Bromley a chance to open their account.

A poor kick out on the full just outside the 22 was followed by a penalty and in the blink of an eye the Warman crowd were anticipating a score from a 5-metre throw. The ball was overthrown and recovered by Dan Jones allowing Tom Lennard to lift the siege. Bromley's wastefulness was punished as Sam Lennie made a telling break that released Laurence Wise near halfway and the scrum-half did exceptionally well to evade the cover to score. At the end of the first quarter the Black and Whites led 13-0, rather against the run of play.

A spirited Bromley once more put Sutton under the cosh as wave upon wave of attack ran into the adamant defence deep in the visitors' 22. The defence was rewarded with a penalty which Wise took quickly and sprinted off down the touchline. The ball was switched to the open side and the ubiquitous Dan Jones carried it deep into the 22. The pack trundled towards the line before releasing the backs as Agu Benson walked in for a debut try in the corner. From touch Tom Lennard impressively added the conversion for a 20-0 advantage.

Moments later the Lennard boot created the next try as a 50/22 was followed by a penalty kicked into the corner. From the ideal attacking platform Sutton scored their bonus point try just after the half hour. Sustained pressure resulted in a 5-metre penalty and Gareth O'Brien scored his second for 25-0.

The scenario did not improve for the home side in the remainder of the first period. Ewan McTaggart, deputising as captain, stole a lineout ball. Sam Lennie made the break and was ably supported by fellow Kiwi Adam Bibby who weaved his way through the defence with a mesmeric 40-metre run to gift Kyren Ghumra his first try. Lennard added the extras for 32-0.

The mighty McTaggart once more seized a loose ball and the visitors, oozing confidence, opted to run out of defence. Agu Benson took it into enemy territory and passed to fellow wing Ghumra to run in a stunning score. The first half ended with a chastening score reading Bromley 0 Sutton & Epsom 37.

## Bromley's fightback

It was imperative for the hosts to rally and ideally get the opening score of the second period to gain a foothold in a match that had rapidly gone against them. However, Sutton resumed where they had left off and created a perfect scoring opportunity after a minute. The final pass was intercepted with the line begging and Bromley survived.

Buoyed by the reprieve the Kent team were soon on the attack. Securing the ball from a 5-metre line their overwhelming pressure from the pack led to a try from close-range to open their account. Jonathon Griffiths added the conversion as the Warman crowd applauded a much-deserved score.

A determined opposition was frustrating the Black and Whites and ten minutes later they had conceded a second try.

Once more the pack powered over with lock Harrison Pullen the beneficiary and Griffiths' boot making it 14-37. A stunning comeback victory was very unlikely but a bonus point for four tries was certainly achievable at this stage.

To the great credit of the Warman warriors the Black and Whites never regained the fluency and dominance of their first half performance. However, they did add two further tries after butchering another golden opportunity with a wayward pass. The seventh try was of the popular but mundane variety as the excellent Sutton lineout ushered Sam Lennie over the line for a catch-and-drive score.

The eighth, and final try from the visitors, was far more spectacular. Kyren Ghumra gathered a kick and evaded the close attentions of two tacklers to run the ball back 35 metres to complete an impressive hat trick. Tom Lennard added the simple conversion for 49-14 and his personal century of points for the Rugby Lane team.

Bromley, however, had the final say in this highly entertaining match. Full-back George Hawkins scored following some wonderful attacking play. The conversion came back off the upright and referee Oliver Munn concluded the match with Sutton victors by 49-19.

## Reflections and next fixtures

Last season Sutton opened their account with a 50-7 triumph over Old Colfeians at Rugby Lane. This was another impressive first outing with eight tries. Captain McTaggart led from the front not only carrying powerfully but disrupting the Bromley lineout. Hooker Lennie once more excelled in a sterling performance in the loose by a mobile Sutton pack. Laurence Wise at scrum-half injected a high tempo into the match creating one try with his tap penalty and scoring another with a marvellous solo run.

Adam Bibby was devastating whenever allowed any space and the wingers benefited with four tries. Debutant Agu Benson impressed whilst veteran Ghumra took the plaudits with a hat trick.

Bromley's preparations had been hindered by the drought and additionally they were short of key players. Their forwards carried with power but the telling offload was frequently prevented by a stubborn Sutton defence. Their lineout had an afternoon to forget under pressure from the opposition. The back line took every chance to run the ball with Harvey Young prominent. The hosts demonstrated great character to win the second half 19-12 and were competitive to the last.

Next Saturday, 13th September, Sutton host Dartfordians at Rugby Lane at 3pm. The Bexley club opened their account with a home game but endured an horrific afternoon against Sidcup. The Crescent Farm club denied Sutton top spot by annihilating Dartfordians 80-14 in a brutal display. Meanwhile, Bromley will travel to Beckenham in search of their first win of the season.

## Teams

Sutton & Epsom: O'Brien, Benson, Scott, Bibby, Ghumra, Lennard, Wise, Johnson, Lennie, Hilton, McTaggart (c), Finney, Rea, Jones, Hegarty. Replacements: Howes, Tame, Munford.

Bromley: Hawkins, A. Griffiths, Young, Rice, Richardson, J. Griffiths, Friday, Milne, Leach, Withers, Pullen, Walder, Laws, Scott, Brown (c). Replacements: Das Neyes, Rowley, Rushton.

Image: Rugby action from a previous game.

# Epsom racecourse caught short of loos on family day

11 September 2025



The foreground of the image is AI generated and is not intended to be an accurate reflection of events. The background of the image is Epsom Downs © Peter Trimming cc-by-sa/2.0 :: Geograph Britain and Ireland

## Epsom's bank holiday racing results

11 September 2025



The seven-race card at Epsom on Monday afternoon saw a good spread of results with a pair of winning favourites alongside some less anticipated victors, with some very impressive winning distances among them; the combined winning distance was around 15 lengths.

*Read on for a full report of the Epsom card, courtesy of **Sporting Life**.*

Up first was a six-furlong handicap (1.35). Of the six runners, the most fancied was Emma Lavelle's Silver Wraith at 6/4, who raced in touch with the leader, Em Four (6/1), who made all and began to extend his lead in the last couple of furlongs. The favourite could get no closer, with a challenge delivered by George Baker's Danger Alert, but the Jamie Osborne-trained Em Four was not for catching and won by a length.

Next was a seven-furlong two-year-olds' maiden (2.10). In a field of just four, Andrew Balding's Ghost Mode, ridden by Oisin Murphy, was the favourite at 1/3. The colt was keen, though, and though he led into the closing stages, he couldn't hold on for long enough and was overtaken by Ollie Sangster's filly Mayaada in the hands of Sam James at 4/1. The Nick Bradley Racing-owned filly won by a tidy two and a half lengths.

Following was a seven-furlong handicap (2.45). This saw our first winning favourite of the afternoon; David Loughnane's Partisan Hero under Rossa Ryan (3/1). This was a competitive race, with a number of possibilities with two furlongs left to travel. The market leader had to fight Archie Watson's Aurora Majesty home, but managed to cross the line a head in front with Native American following on in third.

An amateur riders' handicap was next, run over a mile and four furlongs (3.20). This race saw the second and final favourite of the day win a race; Gordon Grey at 9/4 for Ben Brookhouse under Paul Hainey. The grey gelding was never really in doubt, making all from the off in first-time cheekpieces, and no other runner made it close to him. Ridden home, Gordon Grey was eased down over the line and won by a very impressive five lengths.

Race five was a handicap run over a mile and a quarter (3.55). Oisin Murphy rode the favourite once again, Andrew Balding's Soul Dance, who led the field for most of the way. The pair looked likely to win at the two-furlong pole, but Ed Walker's Stormy Monday ran on home more strongly and snatched the win under Kieran Shoemark, eventually crossing the line nearly three lengths ahead.

The penultimate race was a handicap over the extended mile (4.28). Three of the field of six were finishing strongly; Jiff's Army, Due West and Play Me, with the former pair ahead of the rest. In the end, though Jiff's Army and Due West duelled home, it was Jiff's Army who stuck his neck to take the win under Rossa Ryan at 11/2.

Finally, the afternoon's racing concluded with a seven-furlong handicap (5.03). It was a slightly surprising result in that the favourite, 11/8 Silver Trumpet, all but pulled up having reportedly lost his action, while the 9/1 shot The Bitter Moose made all under Jim Crowley to win in emphatic fashion by nearly five lengths, totally unchallenged.

#### **Epsom results - Monday:**

1.35 - Em Four (6/1)

2.10 - Mayaada (4/1)

2.45 - Partisan Hero (3/1)

3.20 - Gordon Grey (9/4)

3.55 - Stormy Monday (5/1)

4.28 - Jiff's Army (11/2)

5.03 - The Bitter Moose (9/1)

Horses racing Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

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## **Today's Epsom racing tips**

11 September 2025



Epsom Racecourse presents its latest meeting on Friday afternoon, with a six-race card consisting of five handicaps and one fillies' novice.

*Read on for a full preview of and tips for the Epsom card, courtesy of Boyle Sports, who offer all the latest **horse racing odds**.*

The first race of the afternoon is a seven-furlong two-year-olds' nursery handicap (2.05). Of the six runners, Tom Dascombe's Jowalla is the only one making her handicap debut, and wears first-time cheekpieces for the occasion, which could help her improve on her consistent placing form. Gascony wasn't suited by the heavy ground when last seen at Glorious Goodwood, and should be able to get back to his best today under a five pound claimer.

Next is a seven-furlong two-year-old fillies' novice (2.40). We have two newcomers here; Born To Bright, who wears a hood, and the expensive Lady Vanguard, who cost 320,000 guineas as a yearling, for George Scott. Calendar Girl is the filly she has to get past, who won on her debut in smart fashion at Newbury in July, but Epsom is a very different track and Lady Vanguard's trainer has the higher strike rate with juveniles in this context, so ought to be worth siding with.

Race three is a six-furlong handicap (3.15). There are just five runners here, but this is nonetheless a competitive race. Harry Eustace's Kisskodi completed a hat-trick earlier this season, and another good race is unlikely to be beyond him, especially with a claiming rider in the saddle again. Nordic Games has good course form, having placed a very close second at this track last time out, so could be involved again.

The fourth race is a mile and a quarter handicap (3.50). Letsbeatsepsis should have a chance, remaining on the same mark today as when second of 10 last time out, while Twilight Guest is back down to his last winning mark and could get back to the hat-trick winning ways of earlier this summer. He's a consistent type who should be capable of a decent result.

Second to last, race five is an extended mile handicap for three-year-olds (4.20). Jim Boyle's Play Me has come down two pounds in the handicap lately and now looks tempting, especially with a seven-pound claimer in the saddle. Though disappointing last time out at Lingfield, he is normally better and should be able to do his best work today. Coma Cluster similarly is at a winnable mark and should be at the sharp end.

Finally, the afternoon's racing concludes with a seven-furlong handicap (4.50). Revolutionise should be bang there, running off the same mark as last time when second over course and distance. Course and distance winner Marlay Park also should be able to run a good race on the same mark as a promising performance last time at Brighton. With Luke Catton's three pounds to boot, he could win this.

*Epsom selections - Friday (via Sporting Life):*

2.05 - Gascony

2.40 - Lady Vanguard

3.15 - Kisskodi

3.50 - Letsbeatsepsis

4.20 - Coma Cluster

4.50 - Marlay Park

Horses racing Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

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## **Banned fan cheers on Epsom and Ewell FC from tree**

11 September 2025



A lifelong supporter of Epsom & Ewell Football Club has taken to watching matches from a nearby tree after receiving what he describes as an “unwarranted” lifetime ban from the club’s ground.

Richard Lambert, 58, has followed the ninth-tier side for nearly 44 years. The ban was imposed in January following a long-running series of disputes with the club’s committee.

Mr Lambert told the BBC he believes the suspension was triggered after he altered the name of his personal X (formerly Twitter) account to appear as if it were the club’s official account. He has been a frequent critic of the club’s management on social media and on his personal website, with some posts directed at individual committee members.

Since April, the BBC says it has approached Epsom & Ewell three times for details about the ban. The club has declined to discuss the matter beyond stating: “We have had a number of issues with this supporter over the years. We do not want to discuss this any further. The matter has been dealt with.”

A letter from the club to Mr Lambert, seen by the BBC, cites only a breach of a previous agreement over use of social media. It referred to an “indefinite” ban, but the club has since told the BBC it is now for life. Mr Lambert says he has not been officially informed of this change.

Mr Lambert, who first attended a match as a 15-year-old in 1981, has served as the club’s historian for two decades, producing statistical archives and match reports. “All I want to do is see my team play,” he said, “but I also want to see the culture at our club change towards valuing its supporters.”

Lifetime bans from football stadiums are rare and generally imposed only for serious offences or criminal acts, which is not alleged in this case. Clubs, however, are entitled to refuse entry to anyone without giving a reason.

The Football Supporters’ Association told the BBC it had attempted to mediate between Mr Lambert and the club but received no response from the club’s committee. “At non-league level, fans are the lifeblood of the game,” said the FSA’s Garreth Cummins. “In a situation like this, we don’t see that either side is winning.”

Mr Lambert initially watched games from outside the perimeter fence but says that after the club stationed security to move him on, he began climbing a tree for a better view. He ended last season 30ft up overlooking King George’s Field in Surbiton. This season, the Salts have returned to Leg O’Mutton Field in Cobham, sharing with Cobham FC, and Mr Lambert has found a lower tree with a full view of the pitch.

Founded in 1918 as Epsom Juniors, Epsom & Ewell’s greatest moment came in 1975 when they reached the inaugural FA Vase final at Wembley, losing 2-1 to Hoddesdon Town. Last season they lifted the Southern Combination Challenge Cup, defeating Abbey Rangers 1-0 in the final. The Salts averaged around 90 spectators at home league matches in 2024-25.

“If the ban stays in place for life,” Mr Lambert told the BBC, “then I’ll be climbing this tree for the rest of my life - or at least for as long as I’m physically able to.”

Richard Lambert sitting in a tree looking on to the pitch where Epsom & Ewell play, with his back to the camera and the pitch in the background

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## Local Epsom lad who became a radio shock-jock in sport passes

11 September 2025



James Whale (Michael James Whale) - 13 May 1951 - 4 August 2025

James Whale was born Michael James Whale on 13 May 1951 in Ewell, Surrey, into a middle-class family. His father, David, worked in a family clothing business before running The Green Man pub in Ewell; his mother, Anne (née Price),

was a former ballet dancer. He attended Linton's Lane Secondary Modern and Longmead County Secondary Boys School in Epsom, as noted in your original obituary—he later admitted to disliking Longmead.

After first taking a job at Harrods and briefly becoming a DJ for Radio Topshop in the early 1970s, Whale began his radio career more formally in 1974 at Metro Radio in northeast England, gaining traction later at BBC Radio Derby.

Whale became nationally known during the late 1980s with The James Whale Radio Show on Radio Aire, which became a hit when simulcast on Yorkshire Television and later nationally on ITV. He pioneered what became known as “shock-jock” radio, with a brash, provocative style echoing American counterparts—this defined much of his broadcasting identity.

#### Broadcasting career highlights

- **TalkSPORT (1995–2008):** Whale hosted the late-night show on Talk Radio UK, later renamed TalkSPORT. He became a fixture of overnight radio until his controversial suspension in 2008 for urging listeners to vote for Boris Johnson—he considered legal action against TalkSPORT, which he later withdrew.
- **LBC (2008–2013):** Following TalkSPORT, he moved to LBC 97.3, hosting drivetime and other slots.
- **Podcasting and BBC Radio:** In 2013, he launched The James Whale Radio Show podcast, and later joined BBC Essex as a breakfast show presenter (2013–2016).
- **Celebrity Big Brother:** He appeared in Celebrity Big Brother in 2016, finishing in ninth place.
- **talkRADIO & TalkTV (2016–2025):** Beginning in 2016, he hosted evening shows on talkRADIO. He also presented James Whale Unleashed on both TalkTV and talkRADIO. He was suspended briefly in 2018 for a controversial interview—he later returned to air.

Whale was married to Melinda Maxted from 1970 until her death from lung cancer in 2018; they had two sons. In 2021, he married Nadine Lamont-Brown, who remained devoted to him through his illness.

Diagnosed with kidney cancer in February 2000, Whale underwent surgery and chose not to have chemotherapy. In 2006, he launched the James Whale Fund for Kidney Cancer, which later became Kidney Cancer UK (2016), a leading charity supporting patients and research.

In 2020, the cancer returned aggressively, spreading to his spine, brain, lungs, and remaining kidney—he documented this battle publicly and urged others to get tested. In 2023, he stopped treatment, acknowledging he was nearing the end of his cancer journey.

Whale was appointed an MBE in the 2024 New Year Honours for his contributions to broadcasting and charity. He spent Christmas 2024 in intensive care but celebrated his 74th birthday before entering hospice care, passing away peacefully on 4 August 2025 at age 74, with Nadine by his side.

James Whale is mourned as a broadcasting maverick—Britain's first “shock-jock”—who blended confrontation with compassion, particularly in helping distressed callers. Described as fearless and a beloved figure to many, he leaves behind a legacy of entertainment, advocacy, and resilience.

Image: James Whale - Taken whilst recording The James Whale Radio Show By Rob Deadairpodcast - Own work CC BY-SA 4.0

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## Today's Epsom racing tips

11 September 2025



Epsom Racecourse presents its latest race meeting on Thursday evening, with a total of six races; five handicaps and a juveniles' novice race.

*Read on for a full preview of and tips from the Epsom card, courtesy of Racing TV, who provide all of the latest **free bets** offers.*

Kicking off the evening's action is an apprentice handicap over a mile and two furlongs (5.50). Etretat won last time out at Newcastle just five days ago and carries a penalty as a result, although is given three pounds back by his claiming rider. He is more of an all-weather specialist, however, having never won a race on turf, and is easy to look past. Despite carrying top weight, Carnival Day looks capable of winning this due to remaining on the same mark as when running well for fourth of 12 at Yarmouth last time, and has good form at this track, which is a big positive.

Next is a two-year-olds' novice run over seven furlongs (6.25). Of the six runners, Dylan Cunha's Champagne Dream is the only newcomer here; a colt by Oasis Dream who is probably best watched this term, looking on paper to be more a next-season sort. William Knight's horses are running well at present, and his colt Norfolk Blue looks to have a solid chance. This son of A'Ali placed a close second last time out at Lingfield, and is given a handy three pounds by his rider, Brandon Wilkie.

Race three is a mile and a half handicap (7.00). King's Castle seeks a hat-trick, having won his last two starts at Ffos Las and Sandown under the same rider; seven-pound claimer Taryn Langley. He wears a first time hood, and shouldn't have too much standing in his way here at a track that he likes. Chips And Rice ought to be in with a big chance here, fit from a hurdling campaign and now on a very workable Flat mark for today. Jockey Pat Cosgrave is in good form, and Robert Stephens' horses are running well at present too.

Following is an extended mile fillies' handicap (7.30). We have only four runners here, all of which have won at least one race this term. Pink Azalea seeks a hat-trick, having won her last two starts at Ripon and Carlisle, and has Jack Dace's seven pounds in hand. Both Brielle and Revelance won their last starts, but Brielle's win was more applicable to this race. She does have a lot of weight to shoulder now though, hence it might be better to side with Revelance today, whose form is of a very promising level.

Penultimately we have a seven-furlong handicap for three-year-olds (8.00). With nine runners, this is a competitive affair. Miakoda won his last start under Pat Cosgrave, who rides again today, and though this will be a tougher ask, this gelding may prove to suit this track quite well and could make a good show of himself. That said, he might not appreciate any rain that falls, so it may be safer to side with the likes of Uncle Simon, who can handle ground with some give and comes here in good form having been a very close second last time at Redcar, and represents a trainer in form.

Last of all is a six-furlong handicap of eight runners (8.30). Twirler carries a five-pound penalty, having won her last start at Windsor five days ago, but is given the weight straight back by her claiming rider, so could easily be in contention once again. David O'Meara's veteran, the 11-year-old Musicka, is a course and distance winner who was last seen finishing third of eight at this track, so could also be a player despite carrying top weight.

#### **Epsom selections - Thursday:**

5.50 - Carnival Day

6.25 - Norfolk Blue

7.00 - Chips And Rice

7.30 - Revelance

8.00 - Uncle Simon

8.30 - Musicka

Horses racing Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

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## **Epsom charity backs Ukrainian wheelchair athletes in world championship**

11 September 2025



*Surrey Stands with Ukraine*, the Epsom-based humanitarian charity operating under Harrop HR Missions Ltd (Registered Charity No. 1117155), is proudly sponsoring the Ukrainian Pickleball Team at the prestigious **English Open Pickleball Tournament** in Telford this summer, taking place from **6-10 August 2025**.

This powerful gesture of international solidarity comes with a particular emphasis on supporting Ukrainian **wheelchair athletes**—many of whom suffered life-changing injuries during the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Founded in early 2022 by Ukrainian and British friends, Surrey Stands with Ukraine has grown to become one of the UK's most active grassroots support groups for Ukraine. To date, the charity has delivered more than **£4 million** in humanitarian aid, including over **10,000 mobility aids**, **40+ tonnes of medical supplies**, and **140 aid vehicles** to those in need across the country. It also funds Ukrainian NGOs and institutions, with a strong focus over the past 18 months on **rehabilitation from physical and psychological trauma**.

Now, that mission expands to the world of sport.

The Ukrainian Pickleball Team arriving in Telford includes several inspirational wheelchair athletes whose journey into sport has been shaped by wartime adversity. For many, pickleball has become a vital outlet for physical recovery, psychological strength, and renewed purpose. Their participation in this international tournament is seen as a powerful symbol of national resilience—and comes at a time when Ukraine's sporting community continues to suffer, having lost



**487 athletes** since the full-scale Russian invasion began.

“We are honoured to sponsor the Ukrainian Pickleball Team and shine a light on these remarkable athletes,” said a spokesperson for Surrey Stands with Ukraine. “Their participation in the English Open is a testament to their courage and a reminder of the human toll of the war. They represent not only Ukraine, but also the enduring spirit of all those affected.”

As part of its sponsorship, Surrey Stands with Ukraine is covering travel and accessible accommodation costs to ensure that all team members, especially the wheelchair athletes, can compete on equal terms.

The **English Open Pickleball Tournament**, held annually in Telford, is one of Europe’s premier events in the sport. This year’s edition promises to be especially meaningful with the Ukrainian team’s presence on court.

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### Event Details

- **What:** English Open Pickleball Tournament
- **When:** 6-10 August 2025
- **Where:** Telford, United Kingdom
- **Team:** Ukrainian Pickleball Team, including wheelchair athletes, sponsored by Surrey Stands with Ukraine

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### About Surrey Stands with Ukraine

Operating under Harrop HR Missions Ltd, Surrey Stands with Ukraine is a registered UK charity supporting civilians, hospitals, and trauma centres across Ukraine. Founded in February 2022, it continues to deliver aid, funding, and solidarity from the UK to those most affected by the war.

#### Contact

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#### Donate

Support the charity’s Trauma Rehabilitation Fundraiser at

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/trauma-rehabilitation-pack>

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### Meet Two of the Athletes: Stories of Courage

**Oleksandr, 30, from Mykolaiv**, was serving as a frontline medic when a Russian shell strike in 2023 caused devastating injuries to both his legs. After undergoing multiple surgeries and losing mobility, Oleksandr found himself struggling with isolation and trauma. Introduced to pickleball during rehabilitation in Lviv, he quickly found strength in sport and camaraderie. “Pickleball gave me a reason to get out of bed again,” he says. Now a wheelchair athlete, he’s competing internationally for the first time in Telford.

**Natalia, 27, from Dnipro**, was wounded in a missile attack while volunteering at a humanitarian centre in early 2022. With long months of rehabilitation behind her, she turned to pickleball as a low-impact sport that helped her regain balance and confidence. As one of the few female wheelchair players on the Ukrainian team, she says the sport has become a symbol of her resilience. “We lost so much—but we didn’t lose our spirit,” she says.