

CHELTENHAM RACECOURSE MEDIA RELEASE

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# **WEBBER AIMING TO MAKE TIME FOR RUPERT IN BETFAIR CLEEVE HURDLE AT CHELTENHAM**

**Meeting:** Festival Trials Day

**Date:** Saturday, January 30, 2010

**Gates Open:** 11am

**First Race:** 12.55pm

Admission prices from £10 in advance & £15 on the day. Racegoers aged under 18 are admitted FREE of charge, while FREE parking is available.

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**Trainer Paul Webber is hoping that Time For Rupert** can book his place in the Ladbrokes World Hurdle with a good run in the £50,000 Grade Two Betfair Cleeve Hurdle (3.40pm) over three miles at Cheltenham on Festival Trials Day, Saturday, January 30.

The six-year-old is set to return to Prestbury Park after posting a rallying victory over the same distance in the Boylepoker.com Handicap Hurdle at the Boylesports International on December 11, when he gamely repelled the challenges of Made In Japan and fellow Betfair Cleeve Hurdle contender **Kayf Aramis**.

In a promising first season over hurdles (2008/09), Time For Rupert scored in novice contests at Catterick and Huntingdon before gamely beating Inchidaly Rock in a Listed handicap hurdle at Aintree's Grand National meeting.

Webber revealed today: "The intention is to run Time for Rupert in the Betfair Cleeve Hurdle. He is extremely well and we are looking forward to getting him back to Cheltenham. We were thrilled with his win there in December but we decided not to risk him on the ground there on New Year's Day.

"The form of his Cheltenham victory has been franked by Wolf Moon and Made In Japan running well since and he stayed the three miles really well. I don't think that he will have any problem with the forecast soft ground and I am just hoping that the frost doesn't get into the ground again.

"We will have to see how he run on Saturday but the Ladbrokes World Hurdle is on the horizon for him - he can't really go for the Pertemps Final off his current mark of 151 and it would be a great honour to finish second to Big Buck's!"

A total of 15 entries for the Betfair Cleeve Hurdle includes several of the other leading contenders for the Ladbrokes World Hurdle headed by **Karabak**, who was second to Mikael D'Haguenet at The Festival in 2009 and chased home Big Buck's in the Grade One Long Walk Hurdle at Newbury on December 29. His trainer Alan King may also be represented by the 2008 Smurfit Kappa Champion Hurdle winner **Katchit**.

The Willie Amos-trained **Lie Forrit** is also on course to return to Cheltenham, having taken the Listed Jardine Lloyd Thompson Handicap Hurdle at The Open in November, while Cheltenham specialist **Fair Along**, third behind Big Buck's in this race 12 months ago, may bid for a fifth course success.

Other notable contenders include the Howard Johnson-trained **Tidal Bay**, who took the Irish Independent Arkle Challenge Trophy Chase at the 2008 Festival and won a Grade Two hurdle on his last start over the smaller obstacles in April, 2007. A pair of entries from the stable of David Pipe consists of Listed scorer **Mr Thriller** and one of the toughest horses in training, **Lough Derg**.

Festival Trials Day, the last day's racing at Cheltenham prior to The Festival, also features the £100,000 Grade Two Argento Chase (2.35pm), which could see the 2008 totesport Cheltenham Gold Cup victor **Denman** make his final appearance prior to The Festival.

Plenty of novice hurdlers will get the chance to advertise their Festival credentials in the £27,000 Grade Two Betfair Finesse Juvenile Novices' Hurdle (12.55pm) and the £27,000 Grade Two Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle (3.10pm). A seven-race card also includes the £22,500 Timeform Novices' Handicap Chase (1.30pm) and the £50,000 Grade Three Betfair Trophy Chase (2.05pm).

The action concludes with the £18,000 Stellar Football Handicap Hurdle (4.20pm, 31 entries) and the Brightwells Cheltenham January Sale will take place after racing, commencing at 5.30pm in The Centaur.

## GROUND

The going at Cheltenham is now **SOFT** (from soft, heavy in places).

Simon Claisse, Cheltenham's Director of Racing, reported today: "As forecast, today has been dry and the going is now soft all over.

"The forecast is for between four and six millimetres of rain between tomorrow and Friday, with cooler temperatures arriving at the end of the week.

"We will make a final decision tomorrow, but the provisional plan at this stage is to put down frost covers on Thursday as a precautionary measure."

***For further information please contact Andy Clifton, Communications  
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website at [www.cheltenham.co.uk](http://www.cheltenham.co.uk)***