

MANCHESTER NOVEMBER HANDICAP

At Castle Irwell bookies work themselves into a lather in case any flat race punters aren't quite flat. It's the Manchester November Handicap, last big race of the season. Topweight is JAI MAHAL; crack Northern jockey Nevett rides DEVANCKER. There are 37 runners and judging by the tips floating around 38 of them are fancied. No wonder punters are puzzled.

Now they're going out. Gorden is on COUNTRY LIFE. For the ninth time he's ridden 200 winners.

Now what was that? A tic - or a tao?

The big field's moving up nicely in line ...

BAKERSGATE jumps into the lead. A mile-and-a-half to go and practically flat out all the way. Get behind this lot and there's not much chance to work through. The going's heavy and so's the flak the rearguard have to ride through.

Round the bend towards the straight it's still anybody's race.

Into the straight Joe Sims leads on COLTBRIDGE, BELSAY CASTLE close at hand and NORTH CAPE with Dug Smith working hard coming up on the outside. He's up with BELSAY CASTLE now but can't catch the leader and COLTBRIDGE wins a good race by 2 lengths from NORTH CAPE.

A grand ride by Joe Sims on a game horse. As for the losers, better luck next time - or dare we say, here's mud in your eyes! Though they'd probably say, it's all the Sims to us!