

Racing on Saturday at Musselburgh aiming high

The dream of building the William Hill Scottish Sprint Cup into a £100,000 race may seem fanciful but no one can accuse the team at Musselburgh Racecourse of lacking ambition.

Boss Bill Farnsworth takes the first step towards that goal today by giving the five furlong contest its own berth, moving from its traditional slot in the course's annual sell-out Stobo Castle Ladies Day fixture.

With a £75,000 prize in the feature race and total prize money of £155,000 there is no lack of interest in the meeting and having recovered from yesterday's fashion extravaganza, the East Lothian track welcomes some cracking entries from the leading stables.

Bill Farnsworth said: "The Scottish Sprint Cup has always had a good following and it seemed the natural thing to do to take it out of Ladies Day and give it its own berth. There is a bit of a buzz about the race and while it won't happen overnight, we aim to build on that popularity in the next few years, to firmly establish the race as the UK's richest five furlong sprint."

A maximum field of 20 go to post for William Hill Scottish Sprint (3.35) and popular Musselburgh course specialist Hamish McGonagall is sure to give his many supporters another exciting run but Tim Easterby's brave sprinter has it all to

do under his welter burden.

Ledbury trainer Ed de Giles sends Kingsgate Choice on the long journey north from Herefordshire and his recent victory over York Glory at York arguably brings the best form to the race. Kingsgate Choice makes plenty of appeal but the northern duo of David Barron's Bosun Breese and the Jim Goldie trained Rothesay Chancer should not be ignored.

The pair fought out a photo-finish to a competitive 5f dash at the last Musselburgh meeting with the Goldie hotpot snatching the verdict in the final stride. Rothesay Chancer will be bidding for a fifth course win and Graham Lee will again be in the saddle.

The William Hill sponsored programme gets underway at 1.55 with the William Hill Download the App 5f Handicap in which Paul Midgley's course winner Oldjoesaid is set to carry top-weight.

In what is sure to be a fast run race, his task is not impossible but the front running Lost In Paris, himself a previous course and distance winner, remains on a favourable mark. Tim Easterby's charge recently made all to score a shade cosily at Catterick and his positive style of racing could provide the answer to a competitive handicap.

The £20,000 Class 2 William Hill – New iPad Handicap over 7f (4.10) could see Graham Lee complete a quick double, this time on the Mark Johnston trained Es Que Love whose forcing tactics

will be well suited to the tight Musselburgh terrain.

The horse to follow here though could be Set The Trend and although David O' Meara's classy handicapper disappointed at York in May, this is a slight drop in grade and he is fancied to come with a strong late run to pinch the spoils.

Gates open at 11.30, first race is a 1.55pm and tickets are available on the gate. For more information visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk