

Today at Musselburgh the race is on for The Edinburgh Cup



Trainer Mark Johnston is going five-handed to land a hat-trick of Edinburgh Cup titles at Musselburgh today.

The East Lothian's course's premier Flat meeting is guaranteed a 6000 plus crowd for the £140,000 fixture and Johnston's Middleham yard has no less than five representative vying for the £60,000 telescop6 feature race, hoping to repeat the success of Eternal Heart and Scatter Dice in 2011-12.

Joe Fanning partners the course winner Master of Finance who was far from disgraced when subsequently a close sixth behind Cannock Chase in competitive company at Newbury and Graham Lee has the mount on the well fancied Alex My Boy.

The latter won a Musselburgh maiden in comfortable style before finishing strongly when just defied by Miner's Lamp on his handicap debut at Newmarket. Alex My Boy could prove the best of the Johnston raiders but two southern challengers meriting serious consideration are the Andrew Balding trained Collaboration and Latin Charm, a rare visitor to Musselburgh from the Newmarket stable of Marco Botti. In a wide open contest Alex My Boy is narrowly preferred to Collaboration, the mount of promising apprentice Jack Garritty.

Musselburgh's seven race card starts at 1.50 with the Bet Toteplacepot Handicap in which a fierce pace is assured with proven front runners Cara's Request and Mowhoob both in the line-up.

The fast gallop could play into the hands of the hat-trick seeking Lady Artiste from the in-form stable of Alan Swinbank. Lady Artiste came from last to first to score at Carlisle last

time out and still looks to be on the upgrade.

A classy field of progressive juveniles contest the £25,000 Edinburgh Castle stakes at 2.20. David Barron who boasts a lucrative strike rate at Musselburgh relies on his impressive York winner Mignolino but preference will be for the Tim Easterby trained Don't Tell Annie. This well regarded filly hosed up on debut at Pontefract and was reported to have suffered a minor setback before finishing a creditable fifth behind Patience Alexander and the subsequent Sandown scorer Tiggy Wiggy in Listed company at York's May meeting.

The final race on the programme, the 5f Bet totetrifecta Handicap at 5.40 sees course specialist Red Baron attempt to win again but top weight of 9st 7lbs will make life hard for Eric Alston's sprinter and Rothesay Chancer remains on a favourable mark. Graham Lee rides for Jim Goldie and Rothesay Chancer always reserves his best form for Musselburgh.

Photo courtesy of Rob McDougall