

Easter Saturday racing at Musselburgh

A maximum 14-strong field will contest the inaugural £100,000 totepool Queen's Cup Handicap at Musselburgh on Saturday (15 April 2017) as the Scottish Flat season gets off to a flier.



The Edinburgh Cup Raceday sponsored by Edinburgh Gin at Musselburgh Racecourse in 2016

The stayers' handicap over 1m 6f (3.35) has Richard Fahey's Suegloo as top weight and the Malton trainer will expect a strong performance from a horse which was placed in Group company last season.

An Irish challenge comes from trainer Pat Shanahan who has two runners in the shape of Carbon Dating, whose last win was in Abu Dhabi in December, and The Tartan Spartan, while Kingsclere based Andrew Balding sends up Montaly which ran in a Group 1 in France last year.

Musselburgh Racecourse boss Bill Farnsworth hopes this new contest will find its place alongside other UK major staying handicaps like the Chester Cup, Northumberland Plate and the Ebor, and fittingly Iain Jardine is fielding Shrewd, a two-time hurdle winner at Musselburgh and runner-up in last year's Ebor Handicap at York.



Three of his fellow Scottish trainers also have their eye on the prize with Jim Goldie putting forward Sir Chauvelin while

Keith Dalgleish pairs up with Sindarban and Listed-winning mare Maleficent Queen.

The £50,000 totepoolliveinfo.com Royal Mile Handicap (3.00) boasts another maximum field of 12, and trainers William Haggas, the 2014 winner of this race with Travel Fast, hopes the journey will again be successful with Novoman, which has been placed in good company at Doncaster and Pontefract.

Al Shaqab-owned Mazyoun is entered by fellow Newmarket trainer Hugo Palmer, while Richard Fahey is to the fore with Rashford's Double, Cullingworth, Society Red and Navarone, while Mailshot, one of five Mark Johnston entries and the highest rated horse in all off a BHA mark of 99, has won twice already this year on the all-weather.

Musselburgh are hoping for a 5000 crowd on their first Easter Saturday meeting which marks the opening of the East Lothian track's 16-fixture £1.2 million Flat season. Bill Farnsworth said: "It doesn't get any better than opening your Flat season with a new race, named in honour of Her Majesty, and with £100,000 prize money. This sets the tone for another ambitious season at Musselburgh and we are looking forward to a summer of quality racing, large crowds and first class entertainment."

It's worth noting that the original 1.50 and 4.05 races have swapped position so the toteplacepot Easter Saturday Handicap is now the first race.

An added bonus for Musselburgh racegoers will be the opportunity to see the horse of the moment, the Aintree Randox Health Grand National winner One For Arthur. The Lucinda Russell trained hero will be in the parade ring at 1.15pm, followed at 2.15pm by a trophy presentation to One For Arthur's head groom Jamie Duff and work rider Ailsa McClung.

*An Easter Saturday Early Bird offer of £5 discount on admission price is available until midnight 14 April. For more information and to book tickets visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk

