

BHA inspection determines Musselburgh Racecourse safe

Musselburgh Racecourse has been deemed to be safe for racing and in excellent condition following an inspection by racing's governing body after four horses died in unrelated incidents at the track.

The news was welcomed by racecourse general manager Bill Farnsworth as the East Lothian course gets ready for its next jumps meeting on Monday. (Dec 10).

An inspection held today by the sports independent regulator, the British Horseracing Authority found no issues with track conditions or lay-out following Monday's (3 Dec) tragic events.

Mr Farnsworth said that while the death of any racehorse was regrettable he was pleased that safety standards and procedures at Musselburgh had been found to be of the highest standards.

He said: "The sad deaths of four horses at the one race meeting was, we believe, a unique but unfortunate coincidence and not a reflection on the racing conditions on that day, or of the precautions and procedures we follow at every race meeting staged at Musselburgh.

"We understand the concerns of the racing industry and the general public following such an unusual chain of events, however, we were confident that the deaths were not related to track conditions.

"It was unhelpful to see and hear certain commentators cast doubt over the safety-first approach that we take at Musselburgh and to call in to question our procedures. We were heartened to have the support of those closest to the

incidents, the trainers and owners of the horses involved, and we extend our condolences to them at this sad time.

“Racing goes ahead on Monday as scheduled and we will endeavour to uphold best practice and to adhere to the highest safety and welfare standards in supporting the owners, trainers, jockeys and horses taking part in racing at Musselburgh.”

The course was supported by prominent National Hunt figures including top northern jockey Brian Hughes, and leading Scottish trainer winner Lucinda Russell.

Mr Hughes, a regular competitor at Musselburgh, said: “The course on Monday was a good as I have ridden on in the 13 years I have been riding at Musselburgh. The ground was very consistent, the hurdles and fences presented beautifully and in my opinion there were no track issues.”

Lucinda Russell, the winning trainer of the 2017 Grand National, said: “I have raced my horses at Musselburgh for years and I will be happy to race them again at Monday’s meeting.”

Trainer Jimmy Moffatt, whose horse Smart Ruler collapsed in Monday’s handicap hurdle, said earlier that did not have a problem with the course, and having walked it before the race, felt it was in good condition.

The Christmas Jumps meeting will take place on Monday at Musselburgh. [Tickets here.](#)