

Musselburgh's Sunday race meeting offers top quality racing

Musselburgh Racecourse's new Sunday fixture this weekend the richest ever jumps meeting staged at the East Lothian track has pulled in top quality entries from across the UK and Ireland.

With eight races and £160,000 in prize money, Grade 1 winner Quel Destin, as short as 10/1 for the JCB Triumph Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival, is one of 15 juvenile pencilled in for £25,000 bet365 Scottish Triumph Hurdle Trial (1.30).

Trained by Paul Nicholls, the Somerset raider, who already has a BHA rating of 146, has won his last four starts including in Grade 1 company at Chepstow and Grade 2 level at Doncaster and Cheltenham.

Hannon, trained in Ireland by John McConnell, was an impressive winner at Musselburgh on New Year's Day when it won by six lengths over Donald McCain's Liva and also lines up in this 1m 7f contest.

The Sunday racing begins at 1.00pm with the bet365 Scottish Future Champions Novices' Chase in which Coup De Pinceau in another Paul Nicholls hopeful. A winner over hurdles at last years' Musselburgh's Cheltenham Trials weekend, he is two from three since going over fences and holds entries in the RSA Chase and JLT Novice Chase at Cheltenham next month.

Co Meath trainer Gordon Elliott is looking to bring over four horses from Ireland and in the 2.05pm Sky Bet Supreme Scottish

Trial Novices' Hurdle Whoshotthesherriff, a winner on a hurdles debut at Ayr last month, will be out for further Scottish success.

In the richest race of the day, the £40,000 bet365 Edinburgh National Handicap Chase (2.35), the two times Borders National winner Harry The Viking is likely to be ridden by regular partner Rachael McDonald who was successful in last year's Edinburgh National on Full Jack.

Nicky Richard's Looking Well was in front twelve months ago when swerving badly and unseating jockey Ryan Day coming into the wings of the final fence and will look to do better this time out, while Wonderful Charm, trained by Paul Nicholls, is an interesting contender having won the Scottish Foxhunter Open Hunters' Chase at Musselburgh in 2017 and 2018.

Current going at Musselburgh is good and Clerk of the Course, Harriet Graham, reports there is some rain forecast and high winds expected on Friday, with temperatures on Sunday around 6C during racing.

Musselburgh Racecourse general manager, Bill Farnsworth, said: "The disappointment of losing our Scottish Cheltenham Trials weekend is behind us and we are fully focussed on this new fixture which promises a cracking day of top quality jumps racing on Sunday.

"The big money card has attracted premium entries and we hope racegoers will make the most of the opportunity to see in action some serious contenders for the Cheltenham and Aintree festivals."

Gates open at 11am on Sunday and admission is £25 (£20 when booked online). For more information please visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk