

Go racing on New Year's Day

At Musselburgh Racecourse they are looking forward to a repeat of last year's Betway New Year's Day meeting with another sold out race day.

VIP packages sold out in early December and with less than 500 general admission tickets remaining, the East Lothian track will again bring in the New Year with a 6000 bumper crowd.

Top rated jumps racing, combined with a packed entertainment schedule and high quality food and beverages will no doubt attract seasoned race goers and sporting first footers.

With more than £100,000 in prize money and two featured races on ITV1 supporting Cheltenham's New Year programme, Musselburgh has caught the attention of some of the leading trainers.

Feature race of the day is the £30,000 Betway Hogmaneigh Handicap Hurdle over two miles, supported by the £30,000 Betway Auld Reekie Handicap Chase over the longer 2m 4 furlongs, both of which are live on ITV, and the £20,000 Betway Hair of the Dog Handicap Hurdle.

In the Betway Hair of the Dog Handicap Hurdle (1.05pm) trainer Donald McCain's entry Knock House was a hot favourite in this race last New Year and will be looking to better a close second, while Keith Dalgleish's top weight, One Nigh in Milan, has a win and two seconds from his three runs this term and, off a BHA mark of 142, is one of the highest rated horse on the card.

The Betway Auld Reekie Handicap Chase (1.40pm) has the tantalising prospect of Olly Murphy-trained Knockgraffon

notching up a hat-trick of consecutive wins in this race for his Warwickshire connections. But father and son combo, Tim and Harry Reed, will hope to spoil the celebrations with 2016 winner Indian Temple, who was also third in 2018 and has landed several decent prizes, including the Perth Gold Cup.

In the Betway Hogmaneigh Handicap Hurdle (2.15pm) three of the last four winners could line up, namely Aristo De Plessis (2016), Sir Chauvelin (2018) and last year's victor Normal Norman. Other entries include Sofia's Rock which was placed in Group company on the Flat, and along Peter The Mayo Man, represents Dan Skelton, the 2017 winning trainer with Superb Story.

Ashington, a 100,000 gns purchase, impressed in novice company over course and distance at Musselburgh's opening jumps meeting in November and trainer John Quinn said: "This looked the obvious race after he won so well in the autumn. Bill Farnsworth and his team at Musselburgh do a grand job – the prize money is very good and they really look after you."

Musselburgh Racecourse general manager, Bill Farnsworth, said: "The Betway New Year's Day race day is unlike any other 1 January sporting event held in Scotland. We have some very competitive racing on offer with the leading UK yards attracted by excellent prize money and with a sell-out crowd and holiday atmosphere, the old grandstand will be buzzing with anticipation.

"For our casual racegoers and those first time visitors looking to celebrate the new decade in style, we also have a packed itinerary of festive fayre supported by some of the best musicians around. If that wasn't enough, we have the added bonus of staging the finals of the historic New Year Sprint, the oldest athletics race in the world."

Betway's Alan Alger said: "We're delighted to continue our sponsorship of the Betway New Year's Day fixture at

Musselburgh. As ever, Musselburgh Racecourse offer fantastic prize money which always attracts strong fields and competitive racing. With crowds expected to sell-out, it's going to be a great way to start the year."

Gates open at 10.30am, the first race is off at 12.30pm and the final race at 3.25pm.

Musselburgh are providing a special New Year's Day coach service priced at £10 per adult return, and only valid with a raceday admission ticket. The buses depart from central Edinburgh at 10.30am & 11.15am, Galashiels 10am, Gorebridge 10.45am, Dunbar 10.15am, Haddington 10.40am, Penicuik 10.30am and Dalkeith 11am. Departures from racecourse are at 4.30pm.

To find out more and to book tickets visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk

