

Musselburgh Racecourse facing up to a year without spectators

Musselburgh Racecourse general manager, Bill Farnsworth, has admitted that the East Lothian track may go a full year without spectators.

Two attempts to stage pilot race meetings with up to 500 spectators in August and September did not come to fruition and with a changing Covid-19 situation, Farnsworth believes there is a strong possibility that the upcoming National Hunt season will play out behind-closed-doors.

However, he is hopeful that racing could return in full for the 2021 Flat season when Musselburgh will play host to three feature race days, The Queen's Cup, The Edinburgh Cup and the sell-out annual Ladies Day fixture.

He said: "We are still keen to play our part in holding a pilot meeting with a limited number of spectators if the situation allows, and it meets all the expectations and is approved by the relevant government and racing industry authorities.

"But it would not be a total surprise if we went a full 12 months racing without spectators and that we started afresh with the beginning of our Flat season next Easter.

"We understand the frustration of regular race goers, but set against the bigger picture, we just have to bide our time and

be fully prepared to hit the ground running whenever we get the green light to resume racing.

“With our big three seasonal highlight race days spread throughout the summer months, it will certainly make 2021 all that more special. In the meantime, we will be ready to react quickly should the situation change for the better and we can move forward to some form of normality.”

The current Flat season draws to a close at Musselburgh on Monday 12 October with jumps racing returning on Wednesday 4 November and running until Friday 26 March 2021.



Bill Farnsworth, general manager, Musselburgh Racecourse