

Musselburgh jumps back into action with best ever National Hunt programme

Musselburgh Racecourse jumps back into action on Saturday 30 October with its “biggest and best ever” National Hunt programme.

Aside from the opening £100,000 fixture, season highlights include the traditional Betway New Year’s Day meeting on 1 January, the £250,000 weekend double-header bet365 Scottish Festival Trials on 5 and 6 February, and ending on a high on 25 March as part of the Go North series finals weekend.

And before a hoof is landed on Musselburgh’s jumps track, things are looking positive for a sell-out New Year’s Day meeting with advance ticket sales up by 30% compared to the same period last year.



bet365 Scottish Festival Trials at Musselburgh Racecourse is a seasonal highlight Picture: Alan Rennie

Musselburgh Racecourse general manager, Bill Farnsworth, said:

“We are really looking forward to putting on our first ‘normal’ full length racing season since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“We think this will be the biggest and best jumps programme hosted at Musselburgh, not just in terms of prize money but in the quality of entries we expect to attract over the season.

“It may be that people are falling back in love with racing or that there is pent up demand for live racing after the stop-start nature of previous seasons, but if New Year’s Day ticket sales are anything to go by, we can look forward to a busy time over the winter months and into spring.”

The 1 January meeting is usually a sell-out event and with a 5,000 spectator capacity, racing fans are advised to book now to avoid missing out on bringing in the year at the East Lothian venue.

The meeting will be screened live on ITV1 and the feature £30,000 Betway Hogmaneigh Handicap Hurdle and supporting races will draw entries from all the leading Northern yards, with raiders expected from further south and potentially Ireland.

The bet365 Scottish Festival Trials at the start of February, which will also be screened live on ITV, is well established as a proving opportunity for horses targeting the Aintree, Ayr and Cheltenham festivals, borne out by last year’s winner of the Edinburgh National race, Mighty Thunder, going on to win the Scottish Grand National at Ayr.

The 11-fixture season is rounded off at the end of March with Musselburgh, alongside Kelso and Carlisle, hosting the Racing Post Go North series finals and the East Lothian track staging four £30,000 finals at its Friday afternoon meeting.



The East Lothian track kicks off its jumps season on Saturday 30 October Picture: Alan Rennie

Bill Farnsworth added: “We are starting the season off with a bang, just before Bonfire Night, with a new Saturday fixture on 30 October and that sets the scene for a number of high quality jumps meeting spread throughout the winter and supporting our seasonal highlight meetings.

“It has been quite a challenge for the racing industry over the last 18 months, firstly racing behind closed doors and then with limited capacities, and while we all understand and support the reasons for doing so, we are really excited about getting back to hosting a full-throttle National Jumps programme.”