

Musselburgh Racecourse kicks off jumps season with new race in honour of Prince Philip

A new race commemorating the HRH Prince Philip will be launched on Wednesday (2 Nov) at the opening meeting of Musselburgh Racecourse's jumps season.

The East Lothian course received Royal approval to mark the late Duke of Edinburgh's visits to the course by staging the Prince Philip Perpetual Challenge Cup, a £25,000 stayers' chase over three and a half miles.

Highlights of Musselburgh's 11-fixture National Hunt season include the traditional New Year's Day meeting, the bet365 Scottish Cheltenham Trials weekend in early February, and the Go North festival in late March.

With advance ticket sales for New Year's Day doing well, racecourse general manager Bill Farnsworth revealed the track capacity has been increased to 7,000, which if it sells out would be a modern day record attendance at a Musselburgh jumps meeting.

He said: "We were heading for a sell-out last New Year's Day but due to the pre-Christmas Covid spike the meeting had to be held behind-closed doors. That was obviously very

disappointing, but we hope to build on this to kick off 2023 in great style, and with a full house at Musselburgh there is no better place to be on the first of January.”



Jumps racing returns to Musselburgh on Wednesday with the opening of the National Hunt season

On top of an excellent race card, race goers will have the added bonus of witnessing the running of the world’s oldest amateur athletics race as the famous New Year Sprint returns to Musselburgh after a short break.

The bet365 Scottish Cheltenham Trials over the weekend of 4-5 February will boast prize money of more than £250,000 with the Scottish County Hurdle and Edinburgh National races on the Saturday carrying prize money of £40,000 and £50,000, respectively.

The feature race on the Sunday is the Scottish Triumph Hurdle Trial which has increased prize money from £25,000 to £40,000. Bill Farnsworth added: “This is Musselburgh’s only Class 1 race and with the support of the British Horseracing

Authority, which recognised our Triumph Hurdle as a key prep race for the Cheltenham showpiece in March, we are delighted to have been able to increase the prize fund.”

The Go North Race Day on Friday 24 March closes Musselburgh’s jumps season and is part of a weekend festival of racing which includes Kelso and Carlisle racecourses. Go North celebrates the horses and trainers who have competed on the Northern circuit throughout the winter months and features seven £30,000 finals over the three tracks.

Bill Farnsworth added: “We had a great crowd at last year’s Go North finale and hope to repeat that in 2023 but we have a lot of racing to get through before that. The course is in fantastic condition and we can’t wait to get started and to welcome people back for an exciting jumps season.”

To find out more information, full fixture details, and to book tickets, visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk